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Aristotelian virtue and teaching and learning in music performance

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Abstract

This study investigates the significance of Aristotelian virtue in teaching and learning in music performance. In response to a number of critical issues in professional practice, it is argued that virtue, framed within eudaimonistic happiness, should form an integral part of teaching and learning.

Through an examination of Aristotle's analysis of virtue, and primarily through his *Nicomachean Ethics*, virtue is presented as having the hallmarks of dynamic and responsive action and therefore as being of potential interest to teachers of music. Having acknowledged that music performance can be a particularly challenging arena, this study also considers why Aristotle, via his analysis in *Politics* of the reasons for educating students in music, provides further underlying reasons for its inclusion. By considering the work of one of his students, Aristoxenus, the investigation also establishes that here in Aristotle is a philosopher-teacher who is, we can be reassured, very much an informed music 'amateur'.

Noting the twofold importance that Aristotle gives to music in education, that is, how music contributes to our development and the worthwhile nature of understanding music for itself, the discussion explores and clarifies the notion of music performance. A range of frameworks are analysed and, after Godlovitch, personalism is defended as a framework. This is significant because personalism recognises the individual as both musician and human being. Thus, the demands, on both character and intellect, emerge strongly here as they do in *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Having established that music performance is demanding, of both character and intellect, the virtue of courage is argued as crucial. The Aristotelian notion of courage is tested and its reaches extended, partly through the analysis of case studies. Ultimately, it is posited that courageous action forms part of eudaimonistic happiness. This study also considers Egan's theory that

intellectual disturbance occurs during stages of learning, thus providing further demands. It is argued that, in responding to such disturbance, teachers' practice should embody characteristics of Aristotelian practical wisdom. In this way, it is posited that teachers act as valuable role models, both to their students and to their colleagues, including those colleagues new to the profession.

With these challenges now identified and analysed, music performance is conceptualised as gift making. Importantly, this contributes to foregrounding the significant aspect of pleasure that is integral to Aristotelian virtuous action. The discussion closes by providing a defence of the position that Aristotelian virtue is of significance to teachers and students as they navigate their daily existence within the world of music performance.

Table of contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	v
Author's declaration	vi
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Introductory framing	1
Perplexities of professional practice	2
Professional and personal contexts	5
Aims and methodology	7
Outline of chapters	10
Chapter 2 Aristotelian virtue	14
Positioning Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>	14
The best type of life and happiness	19
Virtue	23
Virtue as function and goal	24
Aristotle's definition of virtue	27
Virtue as skill	31
The relationship between Aristotelian happiness and virtue	37
Concluding remarks	38
Chapter 3 Aristotle and music education	39
The <i>polis</i> and the citizen	39
Education and the curriculum	40
Music in ancient Greece - general context	44
Aristotle's influence in the musical world - a brief case study	45
Aristotle and the music curriculum	48
Chapter 4 The human effort of music performance	55
Introduction	55
Alternative approaches to the interpretative account	56
The interpretative account	59
An alternative view of interpretation	61
Energetics of performance	64
The skills account	68
Personalism	71

The music performer and significant others	72
The Aristotelian importance of music performance as human effort	78
Chapter 5 Courage: virtue and music performance	81
What is Aristotelian courage?	81
Is courage a feature of music performance?	88
More recent conceptions of courage	97
Courage redrawn	100
Conclusion	102
Chapter 6 Disturbance and practical wisdom	104
Professional context and learning disturbance	104
Kinship of Aristotelian virtues and practical wisdom: a necessary bond	114
Consonance and dissonance	121
Interpreting issues	123
Conclusion	137
Chapter 7 Gift making: Aristotelian virtue and music performance	141
Gifts and reciprocity	142
Music performance as gift making	147
Aristotelian virtue as gift making	153
Gift making as making meaning	154
Conclusion	159
Chapter 8 Conclusion	161
Areas for consideration	162
Three underlying principles for professional practice and further implications	167
Recommendations and further research	170
Summation	171
References	172

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In memoriam

Elisabeth Harman, a dear mother, and Rosalind Horsman, a dear friend.

Author's declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at The University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature

Printed name

Caroline Marguerite Harman-Bishop

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introductory framing

The starting point of this defence of Aristotelian virtue in music education begins with the question: If Aristotelian virtue is a valuable premise upon which to take action in our lives, how can it help inform our response to challenges faced when becoming a music performer? While this dissertation is conceptual and philosophical in its investigation, here is a very practical issue: can Aristotelian virtue provide a worthwhile anchoring theme? For how we act informs what we do - and who we are.

Music performance is certainly a demanding field of endeavour requiring intellectual and emotional stamina, love of, and respect for, music, and is likely to be of life-long participation if not of continued formal learning to the performer. It also requires physical stamina and awareness of self. And it may bring happiness.

In the field of music education the focus is, necessarily, on the skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding collectively deemed necessary for students to acquire. A student's music education is painstakingly built, note on note, into a curriculum vitae of sorts in which there may be moments of 'crisis' - critical passages. Where this learning takes on a different hue to many other academic disciplines is the fact that for the student music performer sometimes these can be particularly public.

Anyone for example who witnessed the pain of the father waiting in the stage wings in the film *Whiplash* will identify with this. At a high-profile concert in which he plays in a jazz group, the son battles both an obsessive quest for perfection and the conductor, his reckless teacher. The teacher has demanded perfection - at all costs. Ambition fights ambition, and the music itself becomes a relentless partner in this quest for perfection. This scene makes for traumatic

viewing, partly because the viewer is made acutely aware that the father cannot shield, or comfort, his son.

A student performer's interaction with creating sound, their media, in very particular ways, musical, is offered, then, to the public - however and wherever that occurs.

Perplexities of professional practice

To illustrate some of the demands of musical learning I share the following additional vignettes. These stem from my professional life, and continue to perplex and astound in equal measure. These 'critical moments', or what I shall refer to as 'disturbances' or 'breakages', form in no small way the impetus for this investigation. This aspect, that of disturbance, is, I will argue, significant. I will return to these critical moments during the dissertation. Now though I give an initial account of the vignettes. Each vignette brings with it a different setting and complexity. Following this, I will consider whether there is a unifying lens through which to understand these.

A teenage cellist I am accompanying on the piano breaks down during a concert. Her father and I confer hurriedly outside the school hall. She too. "I just want to do the best for my child." Happiness is inferred in this statement. Have we pushed her too hard? Has she set her sights on perfection?

Take too the case of a musically accomplished General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) violin student who is used to carefully constructing her interpretation of a piece '(a valid goal one would argue) but she may not because she will be penalised by being given a lower mark if she deviates from the given. But she does so, for intellectually and artistically that is how the student is learning to be responsible for her interpretative landscape'.¹ How does this square up with her future life as a professional musician? Is this predicament tabled for the next redevelopment of the syllabus?

¹ Harman-Bishop C. (Ed.D., 2009: 11) *VITAE and teacher effectiveness: the textures of power*.

Listening is crucial to what our cellist and violinist do. What is happening, then, when a music student writes in an examination script, a listening paper, “Our teacher has not taught us properly”? Is this comment an outcome of chaotic teaching to disengaged students? Is it a reflection of sorts by a student who felt it was their right to be spoon-fed? Or is this comment revealing a learning breakdown in that the material is too advanced for the candidate to be successfully engaged with? Thoughtful conjecture aside, it certainly points to some kind of a crisis.

A group of students and I are energetically discussing practical ways into a learning attribute featured in the IB (International Baccalaureate) Learner Profile (2009) when one asks: “Do you believe in this, Miss?” Do I put the case? Do I encourage the teenager to argue it out? Do I believe in this attribute and its possible application to making music? Would a composer and songwriter recognise the attribute?

And the choir that gobbled up with delight a Christmas carol descant only to be disappointed during the joint schools’ rehearsal that, because others were struggling, the decision was taken not to sing the descant. ‘I was to be eternally grateful to the county advisor [during his conducting of the item] ... for not turning a single hair that evening during the concert when our choir suddenly, (they assured me it “just happened”!), soared over the tune.’²

As intimated, there may be some aspect in particular that binds together these critical moments, or could. In amongst this pushing of boundaries - of self, of music - lie questions. What is best for the music student, and why? Should we concern ourselves with whether or not we view music as a living, evolving art form? What is it to be a music performer? And if these are appropriate and pertinent questions, what key aspects are there which teachers and students might healthily and helpfully engage with? These questions help to elaborate my claim that Aristotelian virtue should form part of music performance education. The aim in this dissertation is to explore how these notions in music performance education can be usefully understood through a consideration of Aristotelian virtue as a possible ‘binding’ or unifying agent. For these are

² Harman-Bishop C. (Ed.D., 2008: 3) *My professional biography*.

questions that are not addressed through a quest for skills alone, or for that matter, techniques, knowledge and understanding. These are moral questions, and therefore benefit from a conceptual and philosophical approach that continues to open these out both to debate and considered practical application.

In effect, when we speak about what is ‘best’ we³ often seem to mean that which will (or is likely to) ensure happiness. “All I want is for him, for her, to be happy.” This was the sentiment inferred by the father of the teenage cellist. Depending on our viewpoints, there are other aspects that may count as ‘best’, for example success, fame. But, returning to the matter of happiness: as human beings, is ‘happiness’ the best thing for us? It certainly seems so given the frequency with which it is invoked. Happiness may have primacy, then. But it also depends on what we might mean by happiness. The quality we are invoking of happiness is dependant on how we view its characteristics or essential elements. Pleasure, for example, as a constituent of happiness, may not say enough.

I will argue that Aristotelian virtue offers us a way of proceeding - it offers us a unifying and significant way of living life ‘happily’. However in turn, music performance is actually quite demanding of the worthwhileness of virtue. Fame and fortune and creativity and any other number of factors may form part of learning what it is to be a music performer. Perhaps they can silence any consideration of the significance of virtue. If so, it is as well to ask yourself what kind of person do you want to be? It is an age-old question and one that I recall the violinist and mentor Nicola Benedetti asking of the (2016) BBC Young Musician winner the cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason. Particularly when music performance can mean being in the public eye, and sometimes suddenly, as in the case of a prestigious competition, then perhaps Aristotelian virtue can be ‘grounding’.

Part of the effort and, in some cases, reward, displayed in the vignettes has as part of its intellectual (and emotional) context the moral. Another question we could plausibly ask is whether it is beneficial to make this more explicit in the

³ I follow Annas (2011: 3) here when in response to her question, ‘Who are ‘we’?’ she describes its use as intending to be ‘inclusive, invitational’ rather than ‘an exclusive one privileging the views of the writer and those like her’.

learning that takes place with music teacher and student. In the design of curriculum and assessment, should teachers be made more aware of these moral contexts? In the case of the candidate described earlier who appears to have been flummoxed by the music listening paper, among the responses we may make to this is noting an opportunity clad in failure. A similar failure in education is noticeable in the following statement.

The reason I joined Teach First was because the school I went to as a pupil myself failed most of my friends, family and local community, and it's just totally unacceptable. (Manjit More, 2008)⁴

In response to this we may imagine a number of repercussions. The student cohort, including its overlapping contexts and networks, is affected. In addition to affecting the years spent at school, this may have affected future life, and life viewed from the perspective of a complete lifespan. To put it another way, we can say that the student cohort is denied the necessary quality, responsibility and engagement - three defining attributes of an ethical approach to work (Gardner, 2008: 128). Again, I will argue that Aristotelian virtue gives us a manner in which we can make some sense of how best to proceed within music education.

Professional and personal contexts

As already noted, the vignettes are distillations of particular moments and perplexities in a professional life. Studying for a professional doctorate, a doctorate in education, offers a period in which to scrutinise and synthesise these issues as, at this point, broadly described. My experience as a teacher in England, Greece, New Zealand and in constructing curriculum and its assessment with the International Baccalaureate and Cambridge Assessment International Education show me that there is more at stake than simply shaping teaching and learning through assessment design, however well judged and opportune.

In retrospect I do see in my career a particular educative thread emerging. As a music undergraduate leaving an open session I was taken aback to find Professor

⁴ 'Teach First' is an agency committed to giving students in straitened circumstances the best educational start possible. This statement can also be read as forming part of a marketing strategy.

Arthur Jacobs kindly saying to me, “You’ve obviously thought about music education a great deal”. And moving on into the classroom as a young teacher I remember disagreeing with an advisor about a music curriculum, its inclusiveness and rigour, although I did not voice it at the time.

And when I moved from England to New Zealand I was fortunate, following on from a school inspection, to work for a week at the Education Department as part of a team of teachers producing materials for use in the music classroom. At the time too, schools used to develop their own one-year subject syllabus for their 16-17 year old students. Each syllabus needed to be ratified by the Education Department. It was stimulating to be told that the music syllabus I had designed had been passed for a longer period than the norm. By then I had worked with the school’s students for a while and had begun, I think, to understand their needs and aspirations.

Returning to England after working in an international school in Greece it was both fascinating and demanding to work with teacher trainees and witness their tussle with the interaction between syllabus and student. By then I had worked (primarily as a head of department) with a range of students with different musical abilities and interests in a number of contrasting schools, schools with varying degrees of ambition for their students. Throughout I had tried to demonstrate the importance of music within education. Away from the actual music making itself, articulating this through discussion was not always easy, although studying for a Masters degree was of inestimable help. And it was a natural move to work more intensively, or at least differently, with curriculum formation and assessment. This I did at the International Baccalaureate. In parallel with safeguarding correct results for what had to become for me the now ‘anonymous student’, I led the construction of a range of arts courses for the IB Diploma. Music and visual arts were redeveloped and dance developed from a pilot course to mainstream. (I was also involved in a number of different ways with other arts subjects, some of the social sciences, languages, and school-based subjects.)

Working closely with teachers, examiners and academics, and along with internal colleagues, it was a matter of grappling with assessment that was

appropriate for the pre-university student, tasks that were authentic to the arts but meaningfully measurable, of contemporary concern, and cognisant of the international reach of the Diploma. To a large extent this is what I do now for Cambridge Assessment International Education (part of the University of Cambridge) but without the complementary hands-on grade awarding aspect. Unlike the IB with its emphasis on the linked Diploma subject model, the focus at Cambridge International is on the discrete subject, albeit at AS and A Level with an additive Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Diploma. In this role I have worked with an extensive range of subjects, including Music (AS & A Level), Global Perspectives (IGCSE and AS & A Level), IGCSE (9-1) First Language English, English General Paper (AS Level).

Looking at this as set out on the page, it is clearer to me now than as an undergraduate that I find the construction of curriculum and assessment fascinating. While contested territory, I have found its articulation, within a syllabus, to be an initial and key aspect of being able to engage the student in meaningful learning. There is, I suggest, a need for the subject content via learning and summative assessment, to allow space. This is to allow for meaningful interaction between teacher and student, particularly at moments of disturbance, and an emerging understanding of what it is to be a music performer, including the possibilities that virtuous action can bring to such a life.

Aims and methodology

In order to answer the research question I posed in the opening of this chapter, this dissertation has three central aims. The first is to investigate whether in today's world Aristotelian virtue is a responsive and valuable way in which to approach teaching and learning in music performance. The second is to determine whether Aristotelian virtue can significantly inform how we might face challenges or learning disturbances during the teaching and learning of music performance. And the third is to identify or construct what form virtuous action of this kind might, usefully, take.

In short, I propose to argue that Aristotelian virtue can, and should, provide an integral way forward for navigating our lives, musically and humanly.

Why in particular Aristotelian virtue as the basis of thinking effectively about music performance? Virtue, whether you are a Stoic, Epicurean or other, is a long-valued entry point by which to frame how best to live. Virtue, as approached by Aristotle, finds itself argued about from within the context of a busy life. This in itself is (perhaps) encouraging in relation to our approach to what is often for a musician a portfolio career. Aristotle also displays empathy for the arts, and draws upon music in his account of virtue, constructing arguments that show music (humanly driven) as having the potential to derail or support (virtuous) happiness. Of greater significance though is that Aristotelian virtue is demanding (it requires intellect and character) and it is developmental (via training and education). In short, it is work in progress. This twofold nature can be usefully regarded as similar to that required in creating music performance over a lifetime. Furthermore, its key characteristics as argued by Aristotle, (for example, habituation, judgement, pleasure), sit particularly well with thinking about making music performance. Yet for all this, there is a degree of instability⁵ about Aristotelian virtue. In his view, virtue, while essential, is but one aspect of a life well lived. This too is telling in my thinking about music performance. The musician cannot for example rely solely on supreme music making. Described by Sherman (1989: 7) as ‘ultimately practical’, I consider that Aristotle’s analysis of virtue remains a meaningful lens, albeit itself open to critique, and one to use as a basis by which to challenge what we think it is to give a music performance as a human being.

Moving on to taking a broader view, Aristotle’s account of virtue lies at the heart of what he refers to in the closing passage of his text *Nicomachean Ethics* as ‘the philosophy concerning human affairs’ (1181b15). In Aristotle’s philosophical quest is a veritable demonstration to his students of *philosophia*, that is to say, *philio* (‘love’) of *sophia* (‘wisdom’). I understand ‘philosophy’ to be at its very root a discipline by which to scrutinise. This is achieved via sustained argument and critiquing, in the form of respectful debate. Essentially, philosophising is a means by which we can engage intellectually with (important) ideas or concepts, to better make sense of the world, to argue and critique and perhaps to shape. In stating this thus, I am cognisant that all is contested terrain, including the

⁵ I have taken this after Annas (1993). In her book, Chapter 18 is entitled ‘Aristotle: an unstable view’.

very notion of ‘concept’ and its place in philosophy. (For example, is philosophy entirely driven by conceptual analysis? How multifaceted is a concept? Does it suffice to engage with a concept by trying to give it philosophical clarity through the means of delving into for example, a term by which it is identified?)⁶ That said, this dissertation is fuelled by Aristotle’s philosophic approach to virtue and uses this, including his respect of the importance of the empirical, to consider and illuminate via conceptual and philosophical argument significant issues or concepts pertaining to the teaching and learning of music performance. Hence, I have used the phrase ‘conceptual and philosophical’ to describe the interpretative approach I take to my research question.

To substantiate my claim, that Aristotelian virtue can, and should, underpin teaching and learning in music performance, I draw upon and analyse a range of literature and artefacts. I consider the arguments in Aristotle’s texts, particularly *Nicomachean Ethics* and to a lesser extent *Politics* in order to analyse the contested notion of virtue, taking care to consider interpretation between contexts - ours, and those of ancient Greece. Understood as (virtuous) activity, I argue that Aristotelian virtue is an integral part of human life and that music students and teachers should have the space within which to develop its particular characteristics. To explore these aspects I also draw upon Aristotelian scholarship and research on music in ancient Greece. Furthermore, I argue that music performance is appropriately framed as projecting the musician as an individual with defining characteristics. Here, I identify and analyse writing on music from a range of perspectives, including academic writing, case studies and music performances.

I then scrutinise the importance of the virtues of courage and practical wisdom in the teaching and learning of music performance through a range of literature, case studies and music performance, with the theory of educational development by Egan (1986) playing a prominent part during the consideration of the latter virtue. I also consider a seminal text by Mauss to set the scene for a presentation of gift making as a fruitful way in which to understand the pleasure

⁶ In philosophical educational research for example, Bridges (2003) argues against the heavy reliance on ‘conceptual clarification’ as forming a dominant part. For an explanation of this, see pages 24-26. Also, see Margolis and Laurence (2014) for an overview of arguments regarding the position of concepts within philosophy.

of music performance and virtue. In effect, this gift making is a practical outcome of my synthesis.

Thus, through the examination of literature, including some seminal texts, and music performances, I examine some of the competing conceptions to explain tensions, identify emerging gaps and possible ways forwards, while also demonstrating the possibility of clear-thinking practical application. I am careful to integrate this with my professional and personal experience and expertise partly by returning to the vignettes from time to time in order to consider aspects of professional perplexities in a different light.

As a point of context, I note that although I deliberately refrain from stating a particular student age group, generally speaking I am concerned with the mid-teen to young adult music performer. Nonetheless, I am aware that, broadly speaking, different ages have different needs. This I make clear in later chapters, particularly when I focus on learning disturbances in detail.

Outline of chapters

In Chapter 1 I have identified the need for a sensitive response to a range of critical issues encountered during my professional practice. These all involve students' learning and aptitude for music, and include music performance. To a lesser or greater extent these critical moments impact on the happiness of the students. And happiness is understood throughout the dissertation as a core aspiration in life. Following Aristotle and the argument that virtue forms an aspect of happiness, I have suggested in this chapter that Aristotelian virtue may be considered an important aspect when resolving or perhaps preventing critical issues or 'disturbances' during music performance learning.

In Chapter 2, I will begin by placing in context Aristotle's work on happiness and, in particular, virtue. I consider this an important move because it gives, I argue, an essential backdrop against which to consider the issues. I then present an analysis of Aristotelian happiness. Having established that 'happiness' (*eudaimonia*) is the appropriate goal (*telos*) and that it will provide the working parameters for the dissertation, I move on to consider Aristotelian 'virtue' (*aretē*) as an inseparable aspect. Virtue (within music performance) is the key

focus of this dissertation. Significantly for any learning that is constructed as active and dynamic, virtue is, following Aristotle, argued as ‘actioned excellence’ and is connective, that is to say, between self and ‘material’ and between self and others. Thus it is not passive; neither is it an artificially constructed constituent of life. Virtue can, following Aristotle’s arguments, naturally form part of life. To conclude Chapter 2, I argue that Aristotelian virtue can offer a practical working framework for both the student and the teacher. Indeed, I will posit that virtue (as now understood in its particularities) is crucial to the learning and teaching endeavour of becoming a performer.

In Chapter 3, I build on the understanding of Aristotle’s arguments and investigate his view of the developing individual and their need for education beyond the family home, with my emphasis on what Aristotle considered music education could offer. To further support Aristotle’s assertions on music, I include a brief exploration of the work of one of his students, Aristoxenus, to show how Aristotle’s work, specifically his understanding of music as an interested and knowledgeable amateur, is considered to have impacted on the development of his student’s theory. In this way, Aristotle’s work in music education can, I argue, be further judged and respected. In Aristotle’s own account of the role and importance of music education, learning to play a musical instrument emerges as requiring a particular quality of action, which, in turn, shapes character. Music can, according to Aristotle, impact on both the character and the intellect: how we choose to reason, including the appropriate use of emotion - and the developing (moral) character. Through careful consideration of his arguments surrounding the importance of an education in music - that of understanding music for its own sake and that of its contribution to an individual’s development - I provide some of the stepping-stones for my later arguments.

From this contextualisation and understanding of Aristotle’s arguments for promoting virtue and, specifically, music in education, I move to consider music performance. In Chapter 4, I analyse a range of frameworks within which music performance can be argued to exist. This is to identify and understand salient aspects of what is it to perform music and, furthermore, what is expected from a performer. Understandably, given the sheer range of music, this varies. But, I

argue for a framework that is cohesive: this framework, ‘personalism’, after Godlovitch, allows both the performer to be recognised as an important figure in music making and respects different music. By providing such an account, a clearer picture emerges of the demands, on character and intellect, that music performance makes of an individual. These demands I identify as requiring virtuous action, and as a consequence of the nature of these demands some virtues, I posit, may be particularly recognisable as significant. This aspect I explore in the ensuing two chapters.

Having established in Chapter 4 that music performance demands qualities of character and intellect, in Chapter 5 I consider whether one virtue in particular, courage, is relevant, and if so, why. I explore Aristotle’s view on courage and use his account to test, and extend, the concept of courage within music performance. In particular, given the emphasis on the person - their vitality - within the music performance framework established in Chapter 4, I approach the question, does courage emerge as having particular significance?

Having offered an account of courage as an underlying and significant virtue in music performance, in Chapter 6 I consider a theory that unsettling (intellectual) disturbance may occur during different phases of learning. By drawing upon this theory by Egan and a case study by Silverman, I consider how a teacher bringing characteristics of the virtue of practical wisdom to their role might act. In short, what benefit is it to our music students to work with a teacher of practical wisdom? I argue that the understanding of the academic discipline and the practice of virtue reach maturation in specific professional practice, that is, practical wisdom. It may be important nonetheless to recognise that not all music teachers reach this point.

Having established that virtuous action does have its place, firstly through courage and secondly through practical wisdom, and that music performing offers a rich forum for development, in Chapter 7 I argue that there is something important to be gained from conceptualising music performance and virtue as ‘gift making’. I begin this penultimate chapter by considering the concept of the gift in society. I then consider gift making as, separately, virtuous action and as music performance. By making such moves, I can consider whether the concept

of pleasure, so integral to Aristotelian virtue, can be foregrounded in ways that may be helpful to student and teacher. This gift making is, partly, I argue, an expression of (Aristotelian) pleasure and sits well with happiness (*eudaimonia*) and is, I argue, an important *modus vivendi* for the music education world.

Finally, in Chapter 8 I argue that certain key qualities need to be evident in music learning and teaching if a student's happiness is ever to have the opportunity of being realised. I defend the presence of virtue (virtuous action) in music performance education, and consider implications for professional practice and future research.

To conclude this outline of chapters, I posit that Aristotelian virtue, understood as virtuous activity, can enrich, and indeed should personify, learning and teaching in music performance, and is particularly supportive in moments of disturbance. With these observations in mind, I will argue that gift making can be an enriching means, whether figuratively or not, in which to participate in music performance. Gift making is both a pleasurable and practical way in which to develop Aristotelian virtue. Hence, I demonstrate that framing practice in terms of Aristotelian virtue has much to offer to our understanding of music performance education.

Chapter 2

Aristotelian virtue

In Chapter 1 I suggested (after Aristotle) that it is the happy or ‘best’ kind of life that provides cohesion to our lives. There we saw instances where a happy life seems to be something that we naturally aspire to, both for ourselves and for others.

In Chapter 2 I consider what specific view of happiness this might be, and Aristotle’s view that character and its development are an essential part of a happy life. I explore the view that virtue forms part of this development and forms part of a well-lived life, and, crucially for us as music educators, can be taught. I look to specific conceptions of virtue, which may help music educators in their consideration of the value of virtue in music performance learning. I draw from Aristotle’s writing, particularly *Nicomachean Ethics*, to help illuminate and illustrate. Reassuringly for busy educators, his *Nicomachean Ethics* is written from the perspective of ethics as grounded in (thoughtful) action. Ethics is a practical science or art. In short, it is applied.

To begin with in this chapter, I situate *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Positioning Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*

Described as the ‘first systematic treatise on ethics’ (Kim, 2004: xi), Aristotle wrote his seminal work *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) between 335-34 BC and 323 while working in Athens.⁷ The broad reasons for my centring discussion in and around *Nicomachean Ethics* are for its believed authenticity, the esteem within which it is held, its richness and complexities, and because this treatise, literally and metaphorically, forms part of the footsteps taken in the pedagogical world.⁸

⁷ Bartlett and Collins (2011: viii) state 335-34 as the time of Aristotle’s return to Athens and the beginning of the period in which he wrote NE. This period spent in Athens - which is when Aristotle is likely to have written most of the philosophical texts we have still (Shields, 2007: 20), Rowe gives as 335-323 (Rowe, 2002: 3). Brown (2009: xxxvi) also gives these dates.

⁸ Aristotle and his students would walk around the grounds of the school, the Lyceum, earnestly discussing issues. Now, the Hilton Hotel is on its grounds. A group of music students and teachers from the school I taught at in Athens performed there.

The most important reason however is that of Aristotle's focus on happiness, with its key constituent, virtue. *Nicomachean Ethics* is, in effect, a dissection of how to live a life as a best kind of life.

Here I briefly identify concepts in *Nicomachean Ethics* that are to feature later in my argument. I also note the importance of a range of contexts (for example, societal). Among the key issues that Aristotle investigates in *Nicomachean Ethics* is, as we have noted, the importance of virtue⁹ on the development of character. And both, he argues, are of significance. Notably character and virtue contribute to happiness, and by extension, to the possibility of leading a happy life. Of a particular kind, this life we might refer to as 'good life' or 'best life'. 'Happiness', then, is of a particular quality, and is achieved over a lifetime. It is clear that Aristotle considers virtue, like character, as of developmental significance. Understanding virtue as an attribute open to development sits well with education: that is to say, when education is viewed as 'educating out' rather than solely inculcation for example.

A developing life construed thus is imbued with particular and overlapping qualities: a maturing character, a growing understanding and application of virtue, and happiness conceived as the 'good life' or 'best life' and the 'chief good'. Facing and challenging our view of 'the good' is crucial, both for the individual and even more (so Aristotle argues) for the city (*NE* 1094b7-11): it is 'of great weight' (1094a23). In other words, Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* is arguing for a particular philosophy of living. This, then, is a brief explanation of the importance of *Nicomachean Ethics* to my argument.

While Aristotle himself did not prepare the work for publication (Bostock, 2000: 4), the inclusion of 'Nicomachus' in the work's title is likely to be a reference to Aristotle's own son, whose name was Nicomachus - as was Aristotle's father. The other part of the title, 'Ethics', comes from the English transliteration of ancient Greek *ēthika* (Barnes, 2000: 123-124). The title uses a form of the ancient Greek word *ēthika*, the plural form of the adjective *ēthikon*, (Bartlett

⁹ The revival of Aristotle's virtue ethics is credited to Anscombe (1958). Notable philosophers involved with the reframing of Aristotle's virtue ethics include Foot (2001) and MacIntyre (2007). Nussbaum (1999) gives a rebuttal of so-called 'virtue ethics'.

and Collins, 2011: xvi). In its literal form *ēthika* means things ‘pertaining to character’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 312) with *ēthika* therefore meaning things pertaining to character.

From ‘ethos’ (‘character’) is formed the adjective *ēthike* (‘ethical’). And in *On Rhetoric* Aristotle describes ethical studies as being ‘rightly called politics’ (*On Rhetoric* 1356a7). Aristotle describes ethics, in *Nicomachean Ethics*, as ‘political art’ or ‘political science’¹⁰ (NE 1094a27-1094b13). But he is at pains to point out the inexactitude of ethics. Because ethics deals with the ‘stuff’ of life – particular moments during an individual’s life – there can be no ready-made answers. Ethics, which is both practical and theoretical, is ‘malleable’: that is, we accept the degree of precision that befits the discipline. ‘For it belongs to an educated person to seek out precision in each genus to the extent that the nature of the matter allows’ (1094b24-25). Our response reflects awareness of, and is shaped by, the defining materials of the discipline – and the differing reasons for their use. Aristotle illustrates this using the everyday as follows: ‘... both carpenter and geometer seek out the right angle but in different ways: the former seeks it insofar as it is useful to his work; the latter seeks out what it is or what sort of a thing it is, for he is one who contemplates [observes] the truth’ (1098a29-32).¹¹

Talented and curious about many subjects, it is unsurprising that *Nicomachean Ethics* is but one of the many texts that Aristotle wrote. Whereas *Nicomachean Ethics* can be viewed as having its focus on the individual, (sometimes within a close-knit community of family and friends), *Politics* has that of the community of the city-state (the *polis*¹²). Although I will refer to *Politics*, sometimes in detail and particularly in Chapter 3, my main focus is on drawing on the ideas (and pedagogical approach) found in *Nicomachean Ethics*. However, both texts argue that the education of the young is important and a matter of ethical concern. These matters are key aspects of my research question. It is notable

¹⁰ Aristotle’s term can also be translated in a third way. ‘Political capacity’ is also grammatically correct (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 2-3, Note 9).

¹¹ Bélis (1986: 245) notes that Aristotle was not the first to compare the carpenter and geometer in this matter; Plato used this too.

¹² The *polis* is explained thus: ‘The relatively small, politically independent unit typical of political life in ancient Greece’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 306).

too that both texts also draw on the arts, notably music, for illumination of some significant points.

As a key aspect of human affairs, both individual and city bear responsibility for working towards the ‘good life’. In a sense, the assessment of *Nicomachean Ethics* as a manual for young well brought up citizens is measured by the outcome of the social-political institution (as exemplified in *Politics*). How well educated the young are, and how appropriately, is foundational to good leadership. The community, and what it purports to be valuable to teach, counts. (This, of course, may be inappropriate or at worse damaging.) A work of philosophy becomes ‘political art’, empirically, in that the educated leaders embody good politicking. Should the young have access to music education as part of this formation? This is an aspect that Aristotle considers carefully, and on which I will focus in Chapter 3.

But we cannot argue that all of what makes us human is captured by the ethical. Lear echoes Aristotle - by noting for instance that the creative demands of a life may outweigh the ethical and therein may lie the spark of the ‘divine’ (Lear, 1988: 315-316). It is not unexpected to find Aristotle, a man with wide-ranging and deeply considered interests including experience in education, writing intensively on the arts - a sphere central to this discussion, and one closely linked with the creative. His *Poetics*, which I refer to, is a case in point. We can argue, therefore, that the individual and the city-state are likewise scrutinised, not via the ethical lens in this instance but via the artistically creative.

Extensively discussed, Aristotle seems on the face of it at least to have little need of introduction. We know that Aristotle’s context was that of ancient Greece. But therein lies a problem. Centuries have gone past, ways of living have changed, and we are reliant on links made from artefacts, analysis and argument, and considered opinion (scholarship). Paradoxically the ancient Greeks are simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar to us. But as Canto-Sperber appositely writes: ‘it is difficult to know what ancient Greek thought really was, independent of what it has come to mean for us’ (2000: 94). Nonetheless, without at least a degree of appropriation, it is unlikely that subsequent others could demonstrate interest in ancient Greek thought. There could be no

engagement with their ideas. And, most importantly, there would be no intellectual dialogue and advancement through the centuries.

The point that Canto-Speber makes - that of inter-dependence - is an important one. Or to move this point on slightly differently, Nussbaum warns of the dangers of 'reading the strange' as 'familiar' (1997: 118). Such approaches can contribute a kind of quiet unrecognised seepage of misunderstandings. This particular type of derailment of understanding is an issue I touch on in relation to the term *eudaimonia* ('happiness') and its translation into English. This issue is involved when we consider what kind of approach we take in coping with ambiguity, that is, our interpretation of materials. A process of careful consideration is required therefore. But of broader significance is that incorrect understanding and misinterpretation can make our lives more impoverished - through, for example, limiting access to other worlds rich with connecting ideas.

While I do refer to a range of editions of *Nicomachean Ethics* to compare thinking and translation, the edition I use primarily in this dissertation is that of Bartlett and Collins (2011). This is mainly because this presents a 'literal translation', that is to say, one that is as precise as makes sense with the English equivalent (2011: xv). It is partly also because their edition is prepared in the 21st Century and may benefit from the latest academic thinking.

And, finally in the opening section of this chapter, this brings us to the broader context in which we note that Aristotle himself forms part of a particular lineage - academic and philosophical - and is required to make the ideas his own, that is to understand them, before deciding whether to develop or refute. To respond to the work of our predecessors, then, and to build on it, is something we do. Nowadays, with that kind of respect in mind, we can view the philosophical and pedagogical lineage of Plato as pupil of Socrates and Aristotle as pupil of Plato, as forming precious dialogue. There remains something awe-inspiring but intrinsically human in the gauntlet that is thrown down by Socrates in Plato's *Apology* (1997: 33): 'The unexamined life is not worth living'. The sheer intensity of these philosophers' scrutiny of (human) life, in particular this moral shaping of the 'I', still speaks to us. We could, based on the work of Canto-Speber (2000: 102-103) on ancient Greek ethics, frame this (dialogical) search

as follows. The pronoun 'I', a moral character, awaits shaping via its agent 'I'.
How should I best live?

The best type of life and happiness

Having considered some of the contextual layers in relation to Aristotle's work, I turn now to consider the concept of happiness. As already intimated in Chapter 1, happiness is important. The words that the parent said of his cellist daughter, "I just want to do the best for my child", might be paraphrased as follows: "All I want is for her to be happy". In the eyes of Aristotle and the ancient Greeks happiness is hugely influential. Happiness is the central premise upon which to build a lifetime's achievement. What is this 'happy' or 'best' or 'good' life, and why does it continue to resonate today? And, does it matter?

Happiness (*eudaimonia*) was once considered by the ancient Greeks as a quality conferred by the gods. Its literal meaning - 'the condition of having a good daimon' (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 309) - helps give a sense of the term for a daimon is 'a spirit regarded as half way between gods and men' (Chambers 21st Century Dictionary). But by the time history meets Aristotle, its success - that of having a good daimon - in religious terms had been overtaken by success in human terms (Vella, 2008: 116). Success has now become a matter of human agency. It is the human who constructs success, not a daimon-like figure. *Eudaimonia*, then, is, according to Vella's account, characterised by success. Often translated into English as 'happiness', other terms used include 'well-being', 'flourishing' and 'success'. It is worth pausing over the matter of translation to gain a more rounded view of this term and its reach. Will the use of 'happiness' (or indeed, 'success') suffice or is another term more appropriate?

Writing in 1991, Vlastos provides a useful rundown of why 'well-being' may be viewed as a poor translation of *eudaimonia* (201). Firstly, it does not mutate from the noun as adjective or adverb. This causes problems in translation as this offers less flexibility. Secondly, he argues, the term 'well-being' is rather removed from everyday usage. More recently, though, its use has become more prevalent. Even a cursory look at pop-psychology proves the point, with well-being featuring prominently. In a more serious vein, Rath and Harter (2010) use

the term 'wellbeing'. Boyce-Tillman (2000) also writes about well-being, in the context of music education and as achievable through music. However, in this interesting examination the notion of wellbeing is implicit; it is not explained as such. The nearest we get to it is that students can use music 'as a way of balancing their selves in the wider processes of living' (97). Still, the first of Vlastos' arguments holds good.

Turning now to the translation of *eudaimonia* as 'happiness', Vlastos (1991: 202-203) does not disagree with this. He argues that in dictionaries of English the range of meanings - both subjective and objective - is not at great remove from usage in ancient Greek. In contrast, Nussbaum raises objections to the choice of the term 'happiness'. Nussbaum (2012: 98) argues that we understand 'happiness' as a state (that is, 'of satisfaction or pleasure or well-being'). Nowadays we find 'happiness' used in relation to the more transitory (even illusionary) fragment of enjoyed time. For instance, it can designate a pleasurable or even euphoric state. In contrast, the ancient Greeks understood *eudaimonia* to be 'a state, or something else, such as a complex form of activity' (98). The ancient Greek sense of 'happiness' is more 'substantial'. Aristotle for example, sets great store on the matter of right action and 'doing' the right action as crucial to the context of happiness. This form of activity, we could call 'happinessing'. But the fact that we do not use 'happiness' in the form of a verb, in the sense of activity or action, even now, supports Nussbaum's objection. In consequence, Nussbaum favours the use of the transliteration 'eudaemonism' (98) in the absence of a suitable term in English.

'Flourishing', is also posited as a suitable translation. According to Broadie (2006: 343), the use of 'flourishing' reflects a spectrum: that of growing and dying. 'Flourishing' keeps in mind 'universal human limitations and vulnerabilities, as well as potentialities'. While this point makes sense, it may present an obstacle. The term is rooted in the biological flourishing of plants and animals and can, technically, be used in relation to humans too. However it does not contain the sense of the 'beyond now' (the 'cosmic', the 'after-life') - that which Aristotle seems to seek. Nonetheless we are mindful of the importance of biology and its impact on our human lives, which is neatly summed up by Connolly when he writes, we are 'embodied' (1982: 317).

A further possibility for the translation of *eudaimonia*, 'living well', is dismissed by Broadie as 'a synthetic statement' (2006: 344). Living well is something of a vacuous statement, although pleasant enough. And 'success' is probably too widely interpreted to serve as an apt synonym. The terms - 'well-being', 'flourishing', 'living well', 'success' - do not seem to reflect the substantiality required by *eudaimonia*, that is to say, its substantiality as Aristotle and the ancient Greeks would have it so conceived.

The English language is rich with vocabulary, including synonyms, but for the purposes of clarity I will use 'happiness' to reflect '*eudaimonia*' and, occasionally, if only for a 'reality check', the (possibly) tautological 'eudaimonistic happiness'. Nonetheless, it is as well to be mindful of the dangers. Nussbaum is a scholar who raises the issue of the implications of using a misleading translation. In *Cultivating Humanity* (1997: 119) for example she shows how the course of understanding Aristotle's ethical theory was derailed by so doing.¹³

Thus, during this consideration of how best to translate the ancient Greek *eudaimonia* to enable the key characteristics to emerge, the view is that 'happiness' is substantial and involves more than a particular state (noun) - rather, it requires action (verb). And I will consider in due course what the (particular) action might look like. I have already noted at the beginning of this section that 'happiness' is argued as central in (ancient Greek) life, and that it may be used to guide or direct out choices. And this is implicit in the father's observations about his cellist daughter. What, then, are the additional key characteristics that Aristotle argues must be met if the identified concept - 'happiness' - is to meet the requirements of the 'highest good', that is, the 'chief' and 'final' good?

What does emerge as the defining property of the 'highest good' is the following: it is the one that for its own sake 'all people do everything else' (*NE* 1097a22). It is 'an end' (1101a19). In a sense we could call it 'architectonic' -

¹³ One of Nussbaum's key points is that by using the term 'happiness' to translate '*eudaimonia*' Aristotle's ethical theory was made to look more like a form of utilitarianism, which in turn concealed other understanding.

something, an essence, that all lean toward. This is confirmed by Aristotle's statement that the 'highest good' must be desired or chosen for itself: the 'highest good' is complete in itself. 'The simply complete thing, then, is that which is always chosen for itself and never on account of something else' (1097a34-35). The word 'complete' (*teleios*) can also be translated as 'perfect' (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 307). The word 'perfect', helpfully, complements the use of the word 'complete' since we can interpret 'perfect' as 'lacking in nothing'. The 'highest good' is also 'self-sufficient' (*NE*). We need though to be careful about happiness as self-sufficient. The view of *eudaimonia* as self-sufficient and complete in itself may suggest that it is isolationist; that is to say, that it can exist without recourse to other of life's elements. But it is clear from what Aristotle says that this is not the case. Instead, 'eudaimonistic happiness' plays a full and rich part in our lives. By self-sufficiency' (*autarkeia*), Aristotle means that it is desirable and leaves us 'in need of nothing' (*NE* 1097b16). Aristotle brings these threads together by saying that 'happiness' is 'that which by itself makes life choiceworthy'¹⁴ (1097b15-16). In other words, this is the 'highest good' that we aspire to in our lives. Implicit in this being a lauded goal is happiness characterised as successful. To return to Vella's account, happiness is a successful realisation of living. Nonetheless, translating *eudaimonia* as 'success' still does not, as is evident from the above, capture as much of its essence as is possible - even within the constraints of translation.

To reach this point we may require some extrinsic fortune, for example, health, luck, or as Aristotle expresses it, be 'adequately equipped with external goods' (*NE* 1101a16). But there is also no avoiding the fact that effort is also required: intrinsic to eudaimonistic happiness is activity. In other words it is not passive but requires action of the sort which feels natural or of second-nature. Actions must be carried out 'well and nobly' with 'each thing ... brought to completion well in accord with the virtue proper to it' (1098a15-16). Aristotle argues that to be able to do so it is imperative that 'the human good becomes an activity of soul in accord with virtue' (1098a16-17). And having considered key aspects of eudaimonistic happiness it is this latter feature to which I now turn.

¹⁴ Some editions include here the words 'and sufficient', (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 12, Note 39).

Virtue

The indication from this discussion on happiness thus far in this chapter is that virtue forms an integral and defining characteristic, and without which happiness of a substantial and certain kind cannot be reached. For well over two thousand years, virtue has been debated. These debates have involved much scrutiny, and in their course many characteristics have been attributed to virtue. These characteristics are expressed via individual virtues, for example, truthfulness. Indeed, such characteristics could be termed ‘virtuous attributes’. Whether this expression occurs via an individual virtue or a collective number of them is an aspect I will consider later.

What, then, in its simplest form is this thing called ‘virtue’?

Simply stated, virtue is excellence.

I deliberately leave this statement above in its own white space. I seek, momentarily, to try to set ‘virtue’ aside from any other sphere, whether ethical or moral or other. This is my account. I try to render virtue neutral. This is simply a transitory step to better orienteer.

Some of this essence of ‘neutrality’ is captured in the following explanation of virtue (*aretē*): ‘The excellence of a specific type of thing, animate or inanimate, that marks the peak of that thing and permits it to perform its characteristic work or task well’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 316). In addition to the clear image that is conveyed here, the language used is dispassionate and formal. This supports a more neutral explanation of virtue in comparison to the use of virtue in moralistic terms, through for example the apposition, ‘virtue and vice’. Yet, the ‘peak of that thing’ tells us that there is something happening. And this ‘happening’, and the manner in which it occurs, is particularly important to music performance learning. Musicians commonly strive to perform at the best level possible. Many hours of practice are testament to this. And so, ‘excellence’ cannot be neutral. Its context - happening - cannot be neutral; change, by its very nature, projects ‘things’ in a different light. This is how ‘the peak’ of ‘that thing’, in this case a person via their actions, can be achieved. By its very nature and by aiming for excellence there is change involved.

Virtue as function and goal

And for Aristotle such excellence seems to turn on this function, (sometimes referred to as the ‘function argument’). Function (*ergon*) is the key to all design: everything is designed with a function in mind. Thus the blade of a knife allows it, or not, to cut effectively. Via its excellent feature, the well-made and maintained blade, it is able to fulfil the excellence it is designed for. This is its *aretē*. As with all things, humans too require features which enable us to function appropriately and well. And as with all ‘things’ ‘animate or inanimate’, the human being has a function. This is to achieve excellence.

Of course, my pursuit of excellence as a teacher may be for different reasons. Do I as a teacher view my pursuit of excellence as resulting in high scoring students or in some other way? As a human being, I may consider myself to have different functions: for example, teacher, friend, musician, lifelong learner, family comedian and cook; and some I may consider more important than others. What our ultimate function as human beings may be is something I will turn to later. But we can see from these examples that function not only enables us to fulfil different roles but, importantly, to express ourselves and sometimes in varying and overlapping ways.

The function, whatever it may be, also serves as a goal or target (*telos*¹⁵). Using Aristotle’s analogy of the archer (NE 1094a24), the means by which we hit the target is *aretē* (excellence). Virtue (excellence) is a moving part (‘arrowed excellence’) - indeed, we might term this ‘action’ - and this is essential to fulfilment, that is to say, the hitting of the target. But by achieving this goal or end, the thing ‘fulfils its nature’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 308). To reiterate, whether a person or inanimate object, it is able to ‘perform its characteristic work’ or task (316). By functioning in this way, it makes the thing what it is and gives it ‘character’. By doing things that a teacher does, a student teacher may begin to present the characteristics of a teacher. And that is his or her target - to become a teacher.

¹⁵ *Telos* can be defined as follows: ‘The goal or target of a thing, the attainment of which fulfills its nature. Hence the English term “teleological”. It is related to the adjective *teleios*, translated as “complete” or “perfect”, i.e., that which shares in the qualities of the end.’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 308).

I have outlined that virtue is excellence of a particular type and is dependent on function. It is dependent in the sense that it issues from the function. The function may vary, but is 'captured' by the particular design capacity it finds itself nesting in. And the function serves as a goal. Furthermore, the status of that goal may be determined by other goals - there may be a hierarchy. Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning (Krathwohl, 2002) is an example of hierarchical, and sequential, goals. This particular taxonomy posits a hierarchy of intellectual achievement. Similarly, as human beings we may give some goals in our lives and that of others differing degrees of status. I may decide for example that immediacy of pleasure is more important than a full and rich account of happiness in my life.

But at this point it is worth pausing to consider whether as human beings we are indeed more than function. Is it function that forms us or at least provides us with an arena for (developed) action, or are we more than this? Is it function that encourages us to move - in the case of the human being, rationally to action?¹⁶ Can the (resolved) function be explained exclusively as a target?

Clearly, function makes an impact, and whatever the *telos* is understood as, it defines us and makes us reach towards some kind of culmination. To take for example the following apposition: piano, and compelling music. At the piano we can make music sitting and striking the keys (say for example, Chopin); we can play a 'prepared piano' (*Concerto for Prepared Piano and Chamber Orchestra* - John Cage¹⁷) and gradually edge towards silence; we can even settle down in front of the piano for 4' 33" (John Cage) and convey music entirely via 'silence'. All give flight to music, which, it can be strongly argued, is the function of a piano: to enable music. That is its 'characteristic'. Using a piano for firewood, jewellery, a raft, would all be possible too, but far from the apposite function. But can for instance the various ways of creating music at the piano impact on *the* (ultimate) function? Probably not is the answer. But, the capacity is there for human intervention, the point being that those capacities may not always be known, and are therefore a source and evidence of human ingenuity and agency.

¹⁶ Suffice here to note that I understand the rational to encompass emotion, intellect and habit.

¹⁷ See Drury (2012) for an interesting analysis.

The *telos*, the last of four causes¹⁸, as defined by Aristotle, was crucial to his teleological argument. The goal holds ‘inherent potential encoded within it’ (Hall, 2015: 195). Thus the potential to make music in diverse ways is encoded within the piano.

But, to reconsider for a moment: the function leads to an outcome. This we know. The outcome, issuing from within its particular working and defining parameters, may be varied. This we know too. This outcome is now what we could call ‘nuanced’, and in addition to the function may also contribute to defining the object, inanimate or animate. The piano, we have observed, is not frozen in time: technologically, socially and musically it has developed. The function (the end goal) offers an underlying context from which to fashion and create, in other words, to respond. In doing so it demands an outcome, a representation of a resolved function. At a particular staging point, has my class made appropriate progress or not? A consideration such as this contributes towards my definition as a teacher. And such acts of definition are made both individually and collectively, by myself and by others. (Music making captures this shifting of ‘viewpoint’ and definition particularly well.) The object, be it human or not, is shown to be ‘responsive’. In this way, I argue, we are more than function.

The end function, therefore, allows for responsiveness with intent - be it striking the piano hammer in a particular way and for a particular effect. Within a particular function a hallmark of virtue (excellence) is its (appropriate) responsiveness (Swanton, 2003: 5). Its inherent responsiveness sets up certain expectations: it leads to our definition of the capacity of the thing. In other words, to give special attention to the point made earlier, virtue does not operate within a kind of neutral space. It is part of more. This is in contrast to the space I was trying to offer at the beginning of this section on virtue in which I tried to render it as alone, ‘aside from any other sphere’.

Furthermore, support for an appropriate responsiveness makes particular sense when viewed against the backdrop of knowing that ‘*aretan*’ is ‘to thrive’ (Snell,

¹⁸ The four causes, giving shape to identity, are as follows: material, formal, efficient, final (*telos*), (Shields 2007: 44).

1953: 159). To be described as thriving there has to be an element of responsiveness, and the responsiveness involved has to be appropriate. We could say that we must be able to recognise this trait - appropriate responsiveness - within the operating sphere of the function for it to be recognised as thriving. A student may thrive within particular teaching and learning conditions. This is to say, their potential is being nurtured, and this can be seen through various responses and outcomes - for example, student engagement and willingness to learn more by making mistakes (that is to say, 'sensible' risk taking).

In addition, the ability to respond appropriately and therefore to thrive enables differentiation. Snell points out that the word *aretē* tends towards 'differentiation' (1953: 170¹⁹): *aretē* cannot be completely heterogeneous 'since it is possible to speak of the virtues of various men and various things' (170). This might be said to further 'open out' the space within which virtue can be considered. We have moved, then, from a static conception of virtue or, indeed, one that is static in the sense that it is morally rule-bound or rigid. We can see that virtue involves developmental change of some kind. This makes it something of possible value to those working in education - an aspect of 'leading out' (from the Latin *educere* 'educating out') our students and ourselves. And for Aristotle, this is the point: it is the becoming virtuous - the leading out - that is fundamentally important.

Aristotle's definition of virtue

Let us consider, then, Aristotle's definition of virtue. In a nutshell, Aristotle describes virtues as 'praiseworthy' characteristics (NE 1103a10). In a fuller explanation, he writes: 'Virtue, therefore, is a characteristic marked by choice, residing in the mean relative to us, a characteristic defined by reason and as the prudent person would define it' (1106b35-1107a2). I will now briefly consider the mean (*mesotēs*) and reason and turn to prudence later, particularly in Chapter 6.

The mean, firstly, is within us, as if almost an internal attribute. Aristotle's precise words are that virtue 'reside[s] in the mean relative to us' (NE 1107a1).

¹⁹ In the original, Snell speaks of 'the differentiation of values' (1953: 170).

But, secondly, virtue 'is also a mean' because it falls on a spectrum between two vices (1107a2-3): take for example, recklessness and cowardice and their counter-balance, courage (1107a35-1107b4). 'Recklessness' or excessive confidence and fear can for instance play a (destructive) part in musicians' lives. This is an aspect that I will explore in Chapter 5. Thirdly, Aristotle also describes virtue as a mean because it involves finding and choosing to take the 'middle' route (1107a6) or 'what resides in the middle' (1109a25-26). Earlier, in Chapter 1, I showed how in the film *Whiplash* there seemed to be no 'middle' route. In fact, deciding on the 'middle' route can be fraught with countless tensions (not least, the will to succeed pushing a musician excessively onto seeking perfection). Fortenbaugh (2002: 73) reflects the level of difficulty by arguing that finding the mean 'is a critical act'. Paradoxically, then, virtue is both a mean and an extreme. It is a mean 'with respect to its being and definition that states what it is'; conversely, it is an extreme in that it is 'what is best and the doing of something well' (NE 1107a6-8).

To sum up at this point, Aristotle considers the mean in a number of different ways, and with sensitivity. Its importance is continually underlined. It is of such significance that we find Aristotle citing the mean as one of the three principles that must underlie education (*Politics* 1432b32).²⁰

To add to our understanding of 'praiseworthy' characteristics, Aristotle also argues that virtue is 'twofold, intellectual and moral' (NE 1103a11). The intellectual is 'rational' and finds its voice in such virtues as 'wisdom, comprehension, and prudence' whereas the moral is 'irrational' and found in such virtues as 'liberality and moderation' (1103a5-6). Aristotle argues that virtue requires both types if excellence is to be realised.

What does Aristotle mean by 'rational' and 'irrational'? Briefly, the non-rational is made up of (a) body, vegetative and (b) the soul/desire and perception (NE Book 1, Chapter 13). The latter can be obedient, via moral virtue, to the rational (via intellectual virtue). Within perception and desire are emotions. The fact that emotions are involved, is viewed by Aristotle as a normal part of what it is to be human. In *Poetics* we see Aristotle approaching emotions, (namely

²⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, I refer to *Politics* as translated by Barnes (Aristotle, 1996).

pity and fear), with equanimity: that they are ‘both natural and desirable’ is not the issue, only ‘how they shall be handled’ (Else, 1970: Introduction, 6).

Swanton (2003: 8) puts it concisely when she describes virtue as ‘a disposition in which both reason and emotion are well ordered’. Emotion (and emotions) play their part within virtue and within an eudaimonistic life, and virtue forms part of ‘dealing with’ emotion (and respective emotions). The latter is possible in Aristotle’s view because ‘By construing thought or belief as the efficient cause of emotion ... emotional response is intelligent behaviour open to reasoned persuasion’ (Fortenbaugh, 2002: 17). And according to Aristotle we can train, through habit, to deliberate and choose how we perceive and desire. This point is important in Aristotle’s argument because, in addition, he does not take the view that moral virtues just happen to be. ‘Neither by nature ... nor contrary to nature are the virtues present; they are instead present in us who are of such a nature as to receive them, and who are completed through habit’²¹ (NE 1103a24-25). In other words, to work towards achieving the ‘good life’ we need to be prepared to show an openness to virtues and be trained appropriately. Bear in mind too that Aristotle is speaking to an audience who is receptive and he is, of course, aware of this. Already, then, external factors (such as luck in having loving and well-disposed family and friends) may be playing their part.

But, there is no template: as individuals, we have different characters. For example, we take pleasure (*hēdonē*) in different things (NE). But much in the same way that ‘Pleasure completes the activity’ (NE 1175a16) so we complete the virtue by taking pleasure in the action. It is not therefore by this account a struggle for a virtuously courageous person to display courage for example. (Pleasure, of course, is not the only force at work here.)

Helpfully, Sherman (1989: 166) describes virtue as a ‘complex of capacities’. This description is helpful because it allows for virtues, irrespective of classification, for example intellectual and moral, and their various aspects for example, ‘perceptual, affective, and deliberative’, (166) to be viewed as an integrative force. Nonetheless, Aristotle promotes the unity of the virtues (for example, NE 1098a17-18). Sherman (1989: 141) suggests that this is because the

²¹ According to Aristotle (NE 1103a18-19), the term *ēthikē* (moral virtue) derives from *ethos* (habit).

virtues ‘imply one another and are inseparable’. However, she argues that the pattern will play out differently according to a person’s character, their development and the resources they have at hand. It is as if a person will become partly defined by the virtue (or virtues) which particularly characterise or come to mind when thinking about that person. I will return to consider this point briefly in Chapter 6. Certainly, it is a strong account to demand all to be foregrounded in a (mature) life. It also presupposes that a person’s life (and capabilities) will offer the opportunity for all virtues (or vices) to be played out. Fortenbaugh (2002:17) speaks about cognition across ‘intelligent behaviour’, moral, emotional, intellectual, and this integrative approach, I argue, contributes to and reinforces Sherman’s description of virtue as a ‘complex of capacities’.

Aristotle’s views on virtue, the importance of achieving all the virtues (unity) and their classification into intellectual and moral, forms part of the continuing debate - including, their universality and particularity. Aristotle identifies nineteen virtues (of which eleven are moral). In contrast, Benjamin Franklin the eighteenth-century statesman, lists thirteen. His approach was certainly, if at all, a protracted view of their unity - he practised one a week! Franklin found them to be elusive (Fleming, 2003: 35). More recently, Peterson and Seligman (2004) approach the classification of virtues in yet a different way. But as De Botton (2013: 18) comments, ‘it matters less what the virtues are’, rather, ‘that there are some of them’. I am not inclined therefore to seek or construct a definitive list of virtues. The point is, they enrich.

We note, thus far, the ‘leading out’ within educational endeavour, the dynamism, the careful consideration of the mean, and the different shading of virtue according to character and life chances. Aristotle’s definition of virtue is particularly relevant to education partly because virtue can be viewed under his account as dynamic. It is not a static entity: rather, it is a developing thing: a leading on towards the potentiality of function. Aristotle conveys this dynamism thus: virtue ‘brings ... into a good condition’ and the work contributing to this ‘good condition’ is ‘done well’ (*NE* 1106a 16-17). Like education - ‘leading out’ - virtue moves us. It is a thing of potential.

Virtue as skill

In ‘becoming’ it is crucial to develop skill. This helps to bring about the ‘good condition’. Essential to this is the maintenance of the skill, that is to say, the practice of practising. It is worthwhile therefore, to consider whether virtue has characteristics of skill, and, subsumed within this, of practising. Although my discussion is premised on practical skill it is almost inevitable that theoretical skill or theoretical aspects of practical skill will find their way into the discussion. I include in theoretical skill that of Bloom’s gradations in learning: knowledge and understanding, application, analysis and evaluation. Can anything in particular be gained by an analogous view of skill and virtue? Do they display some of the same characteristics, and if so, how does this help to inform understanding of virtue?

Certainly, skill (*technē*) was important to the ancient Greeks. For example they are renowned as skilled mariners, with Hall (2015) presenting ‘seagoing’ as one of their ten defining characteristics. Their skill in this domain enabled them to travel, to conquer, to display courage. It also meant that craft - the craft of boat building for instance - was recognised as important to economic and cultural survival, and progress. It also offered the ancient Greeks further contextual knowledge to draw upon. For example, as part of their inquisitiveness they used analogy to explain and make sense of different spheres, as in the contrasting of ‘maritime and intellectual motion’ (Hall, 2015: 16). And Aristotle draws upon such experience in skill-based activities to illustrate and argue throughout *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Skill presupposes motivation, and Aristotle argues that motivation towards knowledge is innate. His opening of *Metaphysics* reflects this stance: ‘All mankind have an instinctive desire of knowledge’ (Aristotle, 980a21). We are given the strong impression that motivation is a driving force. Thus forming part of this motivational landscape is the strong possibility of growth. Given the right conditions, much in the same way as ‘leaf to light’, development can occur. But to begin to fulfil the potential inherent in motivation we need skill. And learning a skill requires action of some sort as Aristotle is at pains to point out: ‘For as regards those things we must learn how to do, we learn by doing them - for

example, by building houses, people become house builders, and by playing the cithara²², they become cithara players' (*NE* 1103a32).

But, there is a problem. Learning a skill not only requires action, but action of a certain kind. Learning a skill requires persistency, persistency of the type which we can term habitual action. We 'come into being' (*NE* 1105b11) by doing, and by doing things in particular ways. Just being in the habit of playing the cithara will not do, for emerging from this are 'both good and bad cithara players' (1103b 9-10). This habituation, 'the action or process of becoming habituated', in other words, 'the formation of habit'²³, if it is to be well formed and of value, has to be carefully constructed and modelled - and has to be for the right ends. Here we have Aristotle at his fiercest: 'It makes no small difference, then, whether one is habituated in this or that way straight from childhood but a very great difference - or rather the whole difference' (1103b 24-25).

I suggest too that impacting on this habituation, or disposition, is context. In learning a skill (or set of skills) there is a context (or contexts) to the skill. And the context makes demands, much as the skill itself does. Learning to play a musical instrument for example would usually involve performing to an audience. This brings in a context of cultural and social communication and demeanour. This in turn means particular habituation. In the particular case of music performance, it may be communication and learning stage presence (literally, 'standing on one's own feet'). These may enrich our experience of habituation. These may in turn form tenacity and courage. Learning an instrument can therefore be a means by which we may 'display' virtue (remembering that virtue is excellence, of a particular type). Learning an instrument, then, forms more than learning a skill: it forms a disposition. This is one reason why children are encouraged, often by significant adults, to learn an instrument. Our formation through action and habit shapes our disposition. Furthermore, a skill may be a way of entering a new world, with all that is attendant with it. Clearly though, some worlds may be more appropriate than

²² A cithara is a 'plucked wooden instrument akin to the lyre' (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 306).

²³ From Middle English: Oxford Dictionaries, English, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/habituatio> (last accessed 16 September 2017).

others, and to some extent the level of appropriateness may be dependent on a particular stage (or age).

Does it matter whether we view the knowledge gained through skill as intellectual or experiential? And how does this impact on how we think about virtue and its skill-like aspects? The debate about the nature of skills was a lively one during 4 BC, and we find Aristotle drawing upon and contributing to it in *Nicomachean Ethics*. In two opposing corners sit Plato and Isocrates; later we find Aristotle joining the latter, and building from both their arguments. Plato favours the ‘intellectualist’ position, while Isocrates, who refers back to Protagoras’ argument, argues for the ‘experiential’ (Hutchinson, 1988).²⁴ Theirs is an argument that includes various potshots but these need not be our concern. Protagoras himself argued that a developing skill requires, firstly, natural talent²⁵, secondly, training by experience and, thirdly, education. In relation to the second point, Plato considered experience as reinforcing the conventional, something that he was opposed to. Interestingly, this finds parallel voice today. Robert Dingwall (2016: 30) writes in a letter to the newspaper *The Guardian*: ‘Neither occupation [nursing, policing] can now be practised with a training based on hanging out with experienced practitioners, picking up tips and tricks. That inflexible model just perpetuates poor habits and bad science’.

Plato (the intellectualist) and Isocrates (the experiential) disagree on five matters (Hutchinson, 1988: 39). These are: (one) the extent of reliability (may a person deemed skilful, fail?); (two) the kind of knowledge the skill contains (the level of precision therein); (three) the extent of knowledge about the subject and its links with the world (what are the acceptable parameters; is a narrow field of expertise acceptable?); (four) theoretical or experiential (the extent and importance of abstract thought); and, (five) general understanding by all (or esoteric knowledge). These show the notion of skill as both debateable and nuanced. In Chapter 5 for example I investigate the matter of reliability (issue one) in relation to courage. An experienced and consummate performer could be

²⁴ Hutchinson refers here in his analysis to a range of texts by Protagoras, Isocrates and Plato and later on, by Aristotle.

²⁵ Protagoras does state that virtues, unlike other skills, do not depend on the first requirement natural talent (Hutchinson, 1988: 31).

considered unreliable were she to falter even though she displays courage during the hiatus. Does this make her any less skilled?

Plato also argues that to be a real, that is, genuine, practical skill, virtue needs to inform the skill (Hutchinson, 1988: 31). And in order to acquire virtue, deep understanding is required (31). Hills describes the intellectualist as taking the view that ‘a fully morally virtuous person ... explicitly grasps why her action is right. When acting in character, she can always explain and defend what she does’ (2015: 7-8). This deep understanding takes the form of being able to provide an articulate ‘account’ (Annas, 2011: 20).²⁶ This does seem a demanding view for both virtue and skill. Annas does concede however that what is considered as not forming a genuine skill may seem counter-intuitive. In contrast, Isocrates and Aristotle do not demand this deep understanding (Hutchinson, 1988: 31). Part way along this spectrum, Stichter (2007: 193-194) suggests that we may well require an articulated (and articulate) reasoning as to why we behaved in a particular way morally because of the ambiguity and complexity that such matters can involve; but it does not mean that we should expect this for the deployment of all skills. Neither does this lessen what may be termed a genuine skill. Hills’ account is more demanding of reasoning made explicit than that of Stichter. Hills argues that to achieve full understanding of moral action, we require intellectual consciousness (2015: 34). In contrast Snow (2010: 58) raises the question about the need for (and ability to) intellectually articulate virtuous action on the grounds that the (virtuous) person may lack incomplete information. This person may for example not know about another person’s character or circumstance. Perhaps this lies somewhere along a spectrum. If it is helpful, (either to the individual or others), it has its place. ‘To articulate’ means being able to explain, and at times argue and defend. I discuss the person of practical wisdom later in Chapter 6, and such a person would be able to access skill both ways, forming knowledge that is both intellectual and experiential.

The following point is important however. Some skilful people working in their own particular domain are not able, (or do not feel the need), to explain and analyse in another ‘language’: the media they habitually use and the realisation

²⁶ Hursthouse (1999) also advocates understanding.

of the artefact (in this media) is their explanation. Think here about the potter. Without this, there is simply little point to the potter working with clay to form a vase. And this artefact can encompass both the intellectual and the experiential. Furthermore, both skills and virtues contribute towards rendering an artefact, be it a piano nocturne or perhaps an act of kindness in demanding conditions. Both skills and virtues serve up ‘artefacts’. These artefacts embody articulated analysis.

But what does come through here with clarion call is the action, the ‘doing’, the ‘artefacting’, so important to Aristotle’s account of virtue and implicit in skill. ‘Virtue is virtuous action’ (*NE*), and this is rooted in skilful action. In his discussion of the elements of tragedy (as literary genre), Aristotle points to the defining thing that action is. Here action is the conduit for success or failure (*Poetics* 50a1). This is hammered home: ‘... tragedy is an imitation not of men but of a life, an action’ (*Poetics* 50a15). Character and thought are integral to action, and it is these that give the action its defining character or shape. In sum, it is clear that Aristotle sees great usefulness in his deployment of the analogy of skill and virtue in *Nicomachean Ethics*. He must have been aware of the effect it would have on his audience because they could relate to the various outcomes, the ‘artefacts’, of the skills concerned.

Plato and Aristotle (a former student of Plato) also share the analogous view that virtues are practical skills and that they represent the mean (are not extreme). Both also choose to compare ethics with medicine - which at the time was relatively well regarded, (Hutchinson, 1988: 18). Beyond this, Aristotle favours Isocrates’ positioning. Aristotle is not fazed by imprecision. The extent of precision will differ according to the matter in hand and its context. As I have noted earlier, the carpenter and mathematician both work with angles but to different ends and effects. Another way in which to consider this matter of (appropriate) imprecision is that the phenomenon is the media interacting with the action of the skill. Action does not demonstrate uniformity either; rather, it demonstrates (growing) experience in the field. Here Robert Dingwall (2016) is correct in saying that ‘copy catting’ is not an appropriate way in which to learn - ‘uniformity’ is not a solution. Aristotle states that to ‘grasp’ the ‘task’ (for example, ‘when, for the sake of what and how’) is not straightforward (*NE*

1109a25-29). And Aristotle as already noted is not fazed either by what can often be action based on ‘essentially imprecise knowledge’ (Hutchinson, 1988: 40).

Previously we noted that Aristotle argues the virtues as being differentiated: intellectual and moral. One problem that arises from this is that Aristotle defines our acquisition of each type of virtue as being arrived at differently. The intellectual (for example, the art of making things) emerges ‘mostly’ from being taught and thus needs ‘experience and time’, whereas the moral (for example, courage) requires ‘habit’ (*NE* 1103a15-18). To illustrate the problem: we may need to practise our physics (which on first glance falls into the intellectual sphere) everyday, so this requires (well-disposed) habit. Professor Mark Warner (2016) for example tells the story of how he has remained indebted to his own professor, who shared with him that he himself needed to practise physics problems every day. Without this habit of practice his professor explained that he would rapidly become less fluent. (With loss of fluency comes lack of confidence and, perhaps, motivation. In sum, we lose well-honed ‘perception’.) So, in this scenario for example, acquisition of both intellect and habit are required. (From my experience acquiring these may not always develop at the same pace. This in itself may need careful managing by teachers.)

Furthermore, our practice of physics for example may also require courage. This may be as simple as the willingness to make mistakes as a student learner, to ‘give things a go’. This intellectual courage may also stray into the social-cultural. Galilei offers a dramatic example of this (Bragg, 1998). But in order to demonstrate courage, we will have practised our physics over time and in response to experience gained. How different in each domain - intellectual, moral - is this process of acquisition, in fact? In learning, both intellectual and moral, we require, I would argue, the experience to grow in skill - and this requires habituation, and experience and time. These all rely on teaching and modelling and the space within which to develop the ability to grow into adulthood, with the capacity to think independently.

In showcasing the congruence between skill and virtue, I have considered their intellectual and experiential reach.

To return now to the earlier part of this chapter, we can clearly see that virtue forms part of the connective tissue - the connecting of 'you and I'; in other words, a socially intelligent way of conducting lives. And while virtue as a skill makes sense in the context of highly skilled music making for example, it is perhaps less immediately obvious when considering virtue as social intelligence. However, Aristotle sets great store on our relationship with others and music making reflects this and often involves, although not always, each other. To truly demonstrate skill is to show these characteristics.

The relationship between Aristotelian happiness and virtue

To return to happiness and to draw together the various perspectives on Aristotelian happiness and virtue, I now turn to the 'Eudaemonist Axiom'. This describes the relationship between happiness and virtue as exemplified at one point or another in ancient Greek ethics (Vlastos, 1991: 203-204). It should be noted however that the focus of the original discussion is on Socrates and his conception of virtue, not Aristotle's. Notwithstanding, Vlastos helpfully proposes three ways in which we might understand the relationship between happiness and virtue. First, the relationship between happiness and virtue is 'purely instrumental'. Here virtue is desirable only as a means to an end, the end being *eudemonia*. Second, the relationship is 'constitutive': virtue is but one of the things that constitute *eudemonia*, albeit a key aspect. Third, the relationship between happiness and virtue is one of a strong identifying characteristic: virtue forms the sole constituent of *eudemonia*.

It is unsurprising given what we have noted to this point that Vlastos argues that Aristotle holds to the second account ('constitutive'). In Aristotle's opinion, virtue is not 'sovereign' (Vlastos, 1991: 209-10). By holding to this account, Aristotle was allowing for 'attachments to the world and to others' (Nussbaum 2012: 100, in discussing Vlastos, 1991). This is an important point in the world of the teaching space (loosely conceived, the 'classroom') as this space houses both academic and social interaction. Nussbaum continues by stating that '... those very relations of mutual love and aid are major constituents of *eudaimonia* without which "nobody would choose to live, even though he had all the other

good things” (2012: 100-101).²⁷ The reason why I emphasise this point made by Vlastos and Nussbaum about the strength of relation between happiness and virtue is that educators need, perhaps, to be reassured that virtue is not the ‘trump card’ that sweeps away all before it leaving in its wake, perhaps, a pared-down version of a human being. A human being is rounded: virtue, significant as it is, is but one aspect. In other words, what Aristotle has done is to avoid the (Socratic) ‘chill of virtue’ (Nussbaum, 2012: 102). Aristotle argues that virtue is indeed significant but life contains other elements, internal and external goods. Virtue is, under this account, significant - but only to a point.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have discussed the context of Aristotle’s work towards matters of human relationships. This has included noting in particular his treatise, *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which the focus is more on the individual, and to a lesser extent *Politics*, in which the focus is on the collective group. To best live, I have begun to argue (after Aristotle) is that of an eudaimonistic life. This requires virtuous action, both intellectual and moral. It offers us a context which is one of development and change - of possible optimisation of what we can achieve. There is an intelligent fit of the self with material (musical or otherwise) and with others. By this account, virtue is not constraining. Nonetheless I have noted that virtue cannot provide all that is required for an eudaimonistic life. Our students (especially those in the music business) need luck for example. But the presence of Aristotelian virtue is crucial to our learning, and we should not short change students by avoiding thinking about virtue. Nor should we dodge it in our own practice. An emerging definition of Aristotelian virtue therefore is one of sound judgement and action, which finds itself in ‘a place of substance’.²⁸

In Chapter 3 I move on, with these important concepts and parameters in mind, to consider the importance of music and music education to the ancient Greeks. What is it about music that Aristotle considers can help a young person develop appropriately?

²⁷ The quote from Nussbaum includes Aristotle’s words from *Nicomachean Ethics*.

²⁸ Here I follow Nicola Benedetti. She says: ‘... there is something in the music itself that can bring you to a place of substance’ (Fox, 2014: 25).

Chapter 3

Aristotle and music education

In this chapter I consider Aristotle's case for the place of music within Athenian education. Can music education shape both the young character and the development of intellect? Does Aristotle's perspective as a non-specialist musician on music education elaborate how we might best position music performance learning for the student?

The *polis* and the citizen

In *Politics*, the sequel to *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle shifts the focus away from the individual and instead toward the individual within the community of the city-state, the *polis*. The *polis* is made up of individuals linked together. Aristotle conveys this relationship by writing: 'The care of each part is inseparable from the care of the whole' (*Politics*, 1337a30-31). The focus in *Politics*, then, is still on the human being, but the human being in a collective sense. The purpose in common (or goal) remains the same: it is that of *eudaimonia*.

The *polis* is both a geographical place and a social institution. That much is already evident. Although Aristotle is aware of other collective groupings, 'empires, nations, and tribes' (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 306), he argues for the 'relatively small, politically independent unit typical of political life in ancient Greece' (306) - the *polis*. The *polis* is a self-governing unit, and has 'the functions of a modern state' (Irwin, 1985: 421). Based on two premises - firstly, what constitutes 'the most desirable life' (*Politics* 1323a15) and secondly, that of the human being as a naturally political animal - Aristotle argues that the *polis* offers the best collective grouping.

The 'whole city has one end' (*Politics* 1337a21), and, as in *Nicomachean Ethics*, the ultimate focus in *Politics* continues to be that of *eudaimonia* (*Politics*, Book 7, Chapter 8), it is important for clarity of purpose that Aristotle reiterates the goal.

We maintain, and have said in the *Ethics*, if the arguments there adduced are of any value, that happiness is the realization and perfect exercise of excellence, and this is not conditional, but absolute. And I use the term 'conditional' to express that which is indispensable, and 'absolute' to express that which is good in itself. (1332a8-12)

In other words, *eudaimonia* is for the people and is for the city. *Eudaimonia* is integral to individual and collective life.

There are many swords by which a city can flourish or become a scene of devastation and this careful reiteration by Aristotle of the importance of *eudaimonia* suggests that, ultimately, a city can stand or fall by *eudaimonia*. Individually and collectively, to reach *eudaimonia* we need to ensure an appropriate goal and appropriate action (*Politics* 1331b24-30). This partnership of goal and action carries with it echoes of the partnership required of a *polis*: that of citizens and constitution (1276b1-4; 6-8; 10-12).

Aristotle prepares us in *Nicomachean Ethics* for thinking carefully about what the developing individual within the city-state (*polis*) might best look like. As he notes: 'political art ... exercises a very great care to make the citizens of a specific sort - namely, good and apt to do the noble things' (*NE* 1099b30-32). It is of no surprise therefore to find he argues in *Politics* strongly for a particular type of citizen, in a particular type of *polis* - a democratic city-state.

Education and the curriculum

Aristotle is clear that nature by itself cannot accomplish everything. Nature, or rather the developing individual within the city-state, requires help complementary to that of nature. Aristotle explains this thus: '... for the deficiencies of nature are what [political] art and education seek to fill up' (*Politics* 1337a1-2). And to become a particular type of citizen needs a particular education. Citizens, namely leaders, require educating. In fact, education is key to appropriate leadership.

But it seems that we need to be aware of the positioning of education for it may not be as powerful as we might think. Marrou (1965: 19), in his historical

account of education in ancient times, makes the important observation that education is a ‘secondary phenomenon’. That is to say, it offers ‘a condensation’ (19)²⁹ of that which is around it or more precisely, of that which it forms a part. The inference is that, in the case of Athens for example, the *polis* is the driving force. Whether we agree with this or not, the key characteristics of education emerge from this account as follows: ‘education is the collective technique whereby a society initiates its young generation into values and techniques that characterise the life of its civilisation’ (19).

In this city-state the role of education is to prepare the citizen for a particular type of life, one that is becoming of the desirable city-state. This elite citizen, a *politikos* (politician or statesman), governs the *polis* (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 313). Governing is an activity, one that requires intelligence and experience (*NE* 10, 9). And it is essential, therefore, to raise those who will lead the city-state to play their full part correctly. Crucially, and in Aristotle’s own words: ‘... the better the character, the better the government’ (*Politics* 1337a17-18).

In *Politics* (Book 7) Aristotle describes the human being as passing through several developmental phases, with education taking place within certain of these. From babyhood to age five we are educated informally, and at five to seven we observe (and are impressionable). That we are impressionable, Aristotle is clear about. For example, living at home we may, given the close juxtaposition with slaves (yet another social strata), ‘acquire a taint of meanness’ because of what we ‘hear and see’ (*Politics* 1336b2-3). Aristotle continues: the third phase (puberty) occurs from seven to fourteen (‘romantic’) and the fourth phase from fourteen to twenty-one (‘philosophic’).³⁰ The education received, if it is to take root, needs to be appropriate to each

²⁹ In situ, the text reads as follows: << ... l’éducation est la technique collective par laquelle une société initie sa jeune generation aux valeurs et aux techniques qui caractérisent la vie de sa civilisation. L’éducation est donc un phénomène secondaire et subordonné par rapport à celle-ci dont, normalement, elle représente comme un résumé et une condensation (je dis *normalement*, car il existe des sociétés illogiques qui imposent à la jeunesse une éducation absurde sans rapport avec la vie: l’initiation à la culture réelle s’y fait alors en dehors des institutions officiellement éducatives) >> [italics as in original] (19-20). Note that this includes a nuance: ‘normally’. This caveat I have not referred to in the body of my text. It seems to me that this is not true of the context within which Aristotle was working.

³⁰ The terms ‘romantic’ and ‘philosophic’ are those given by Egan (1986), and are discussed in Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

developmental stage - this is an aspect to which I return in Chapter 6. Of the various stages, Aristotle specifies the following as requiring education: ‘from seven to the age of puberty, and onwards to the age of twenty-one’ (*Politics* 1336b39-40).

That Aristotle identifies developmental phases is no surprise. We would expect Aristotle to conceive the human being’s learning as taking place in a succession of forward-moving phases simply because there is an insistence in Aristotle’s work on ‘Things ... always *moving towards* their full completeness’ (Saunders, 1981: 36 [italics as in the original]). Or as Saunders puts it, an acorn develops into ‘Oaktree-ness’ (36). The acorn holds within it the latent oak tree. Likewise, it is our destiny as a child, all being well, to grow into an adult, and a fully formed one at that.

In broad terms, what type of education is likely to allow these developmental stages to flourish? To begin with, Aristotle draws upon the past and the current to construct and convey his ideas about the ideal (future) education. Accordingly, he refers to that which is deemed important by ‘the ancients [who] bear witness to us’ (*Politics* 1338a35). He also describes ‘existing practice’ as ‘perplexing’ (1337a40). While the former statement is politely deferential to forebears and their honourable past and to those who might still think it appropriate, the latter offers an explanation as to why we need to investigate - and as a consequence, to steer better the future.

It is natural, given the public nature of leadership, that Aristotle is keen for education to move from the private sphere to the public (*Politics* 1337a24), away from ‘separate instruction’ (1337a25) to the same training for any aspect that is of ‘common interest’ (1337a27). This is not to negate the importance of the private world. Aristotle is clear that our kinship and friendships are influential, as is the way in which we are raised (*NE* 1161a15-23). In the previous chapter I also noted that the kind of rearing that Aristotle is seeking is that which takes place via training and habit, and that this takes place through the context of motivational interests. (At its most basic, anything that provides motivation tends to be more palatable.) These interests may well, I think, span both the private and the public, but the cohesion that some may bring may

make some of particular importance in education. Hence, music may be of influence here. Music is of the individual and of the group, and can reflect social cohesion (be it for ceremonies such as the Olympics or rites of passage such as weddings).

Furthermore, Aristotle states that it is a serious matter if educating young people is not considered of prime importance: ‘the neglect of education does harm to the constitution’ (*Politics* 1337a10-12). That said, the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ remain to be investigated (1337a34-35). Should education be about virtue or the ‘best life’ (1337a38-39)? Should education be more focused on the intellect rather than on the character (1337a39-40)? Should education be directed towards what is useful, or to virtue, or lead to the exceptional (1337a41-43)? Aristotle is aware that the answers we may give to these questions are, in turn, coloured by our own education. And Aristotle’s questions remain current. These are questions which continue to influence the type of education which the young receive.

Aristotle proceeds by noting four ‘customary branches of education’ (*Politics* 1337b23): ‘reading and writing, gymnastic exercises, and music, to which is sometimes added drawing’ (1337b24-25). The first of these, reading and writing, is useful in economic and personal life; physical exercise promotes courage and health; music is useful in leisure; and, drawing helps when making certain judgements (Book 8, 3). Of these, the true purpose of including music in education is under doubt. Is it for pleasure or for leisure, (1337b27-31) or for something else as yet undefined? Nonetheless, and to state this plainly, the fact that it is present in education is not questioned by Aristotle.³¹

Before moving on to consider Aristotle’s nuanced reasoning on the place of music in education - the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ (and the ‘whom’) - it is important to set this against a more general understanding of music in ancient Greece. Doing so enables us to get some sense of Aristotle’s relationship, day in and day out, with music.

³¹ For a broad discussion of the place of music in education in ancient Greece see Marrou (1965). His account is of interest, particularly as it describes pivotal moments of change. See for example page 217. Here the tide is turning for the inclusion of sport (gymnastics) and music.

Music in ancient Greece - general context

There are two translations to bring to the word *mousikē*. The first is broad in outline. Stemming directly from the world of the Muses, *mousikē* is a ‘union of song, dance, and word’ (Murray and Wilson, 2004: 1). It is, literally, ‘the art of the Muses³²’ (Woerther 2008: 90). Used in this broader sense, *mousikē* can be argued as being synonymous with our term ‘culture’ (1). The cultured individual is someone whose education has taken place ‘under the auspices of the Muses’ (Levin, 2009: 241). The second is narrower in focus, and can be translated as ‘music’. Ford (2004: 309-311) argues that it is the latter translation that we should involve ourselves in when considering Aristotle’s reasons (via *Politics*) for the inclusion of music in the curriculum. Aristotle is concerned with the power that music’s rhythm, melody and harmony can, potentially, bring to the curriculum. He is not concerned here with, for example, the power of literature (311). This does not mean however that Aristotle disenfranchises music from its broader cultural setting. Indeed, how could he when what he is doing is arguing a particular case for music within education? Education itself is a cultural event, (as is music). To sum up, I use the term ‘music’ in the sense of the second of the two translations.

It is already evident in this investigation that the ancient Greeks embraced music, both privately and publically (Barker, 1984: 1). Music formed part of the fabric of existence. It is said that the facility they brought to music, both practical and theoretical, may derive from their spoken language. Inflexion of pitch was integral to sense (Levin, 2009: xiv). Consequently, theirs was a heightened perception of sound (xiv and xv). Indeed, Bélis (2000: 326) describes Greek cultural life as benefiting from a ‘constellation of musicians’: music teachers, harmonists, musicographers, and music philosophers.

There are remaining ‘texts’ which help us with present-day construction and understanding of their music: the archaeological, visual, and literary (Barker, 1984: 1). The latter in particular, it is argued, reveal for us the music. This is to say, its role and significance, its impact on social, emotional and moral life, its

³² ‘The muses were born at the foot of Mount Olympus to Zeus and Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory. Their role was to entertain the other gods with music and poetry and to inspire and elevate the artistic endeavours of mortals. In the classical period, each became associated with a specific area of art, literature or science’ (Francis, 2015: 88).

structure, ideas and emotions, and its relationship to other arts and sciences (1). Of the latter, there are three broad categories of writing to which we can turn (1-2). Firstly, there is description or evocation of music making and composing, the ‘practical activities’ (1). Secondly, there are the more broad-based investigations by philosophers, ‘other social commentators and critics’ (2). Thirdly, we have theoretical investigations (on harmony, acoustics). In other words, music in the ancient Greek world was a vibrant part of life, and subject to argument and counter argument. It was, as now, influenced by inheritance, environment, art and craft (West, 1992: 390). And because it is within this sound world, ‘private and social’, that we find Aristotle living and working, it is unsurprising that we should find Aristotle thinking about music. We find Aristotle ‘entertained’ by music: by its phenomena, and by the interaction between it and the human being. We find him writing and lecturing about the concept of music, its technical and social cultural aspects and, importantly for this investigation, its role in education.

Aristotle’s influence in the musical world - a brief case study

While Aristotle states at the end of *Politics* that he is not a music specialist, and Laloy (1904: 137) for example concurs with this, it is clear nonetheless that Aristotle reflects about music; notably, its place in the world and the impact therein. Laloy (137) goes further however. He considers Aristotle as someone who is not up to date with the latest initiatives of musicians and teachers. In rebutting and substantiating this particular claim, Bélis (1986: 55) canvasses a broad spectrum of Aristotle’s texts. Further, Bélis notes (60), unsurprisingly from what we know of Aristotle, that the music vocabulary he uses is that of a cultivated person - by implication, knowledgeable and in a position to remain up to date. In the light of these various points of view, including Aristotle’s, I consider the following ‘case study’ offers useful context to Aristotle’s work on music education.

In this case study, the working relationship between Aristotle and his (mature) student - and the musical outcome itself - throw some light on the depth of Aristotle’s interest in music. I suggest this may go some way to explaining why music education (for the fledgling citizen in the *polis*) was of interest to him. It shows (behind the scenes so to speak) the capability and technical assurance of

his handling of these matters, including keeping well informed about the latest thinking. Critically, for us, it provides further proof of intellectual assurance and, ultimately, further confidence in his work in relation to music.

It was during his time at the Lyceum with Aristotle that Aristoxenus, whose own father was a famous musician (Levin, 2009: 91-92) and scholar (99), developed a ground-breaking theory of music (98). Aristotle was Aristoxenus' last teacher (97). Previously a student of the Pythagoreans (Bélis, 2000: 314), Aristoxenus developed a theory of music to counter the mathematical exigencies of the Pythagorean harmonic theory. He was trying to 'organise into a coherent system that which we perceive when we hear a melody' (Gibson, 2005: 37). This was to culminate in his own treatise: the *Harmonics* or the *Harmonic Elements*. In short, Aristoxenus understood that music should be judged differently, and proceeded accordingly.

Aristoxenus argued that music should not be judged by its mathematical precision (Levin, 2009: 284).³³ Rather, what should feature is *aesthesis*, the ear, and *dianoia*, rational thought (Bélis, 1986: 234; Bélis, 2000: 316) or, as Levin puts it, 'the musically cognisant mind' (2009: 291). These, then, are the musician's 'tools' (Bélis, 1986: 234). Music is on this account both perceptual and rational (Levin: 2009: 229 and also 262-263).³⁴ Music is the object. Here Aristoxenus benefits from his teacher's work (Bélis, 1986: 233) in that Aristotle was concerned to investigate the empirical, or what Bélis describes as 'the observation of the facts' (234).³⁵ Bélis in her analysis comes to the conclusion that Aristoxenus' work on his *Harmonics* is particularly influenced by Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: Books 1 and 6.³⁶

³³ Aristoxenus' argument has been handed down the centuries by Ptolemy, who cites Ptolemaïs on Aristoxenus. Levin (2009: 58, Note 22) writes the following about Ptolemaïs: She 'dar[ed] to criticize the Pythagoreans on fundamental grounds, something that no musical writer but Aristoxenus had ... do[ne]'.

³⁴ Levin refers to the following sources for music conceived as this dual interplay: Porphyry cited Didymus; Ptolemaïs, who was the primary source for Didymus, is the direct link to Aristoxenus in Porphyry, *Commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics* (Düring, 1932).

³⁵ In situ this reads as follows: << Le rôle primordial accordé par Aristote à l'observation des faits est affirmé tout spécialement dans les traités d'histoire naturelle; nous avons vu qu'Aristoxène en a abondamment tiré parti: [autre aspect de l'héritage aristotélicien.] >>.

³⁶ Gibson (2005: 30-38) in her discussion of Aristotle's influence on Aristoxenus takes a broader view.

Music judgement is forged through *synesis*: ‘a musical intuition, or competence, comprising one’s implicit musical knowledge’ (Levin, 2009: 204, Note 1). This ‘musically cognisant mind’ is at the heart of Aristoxenus’ theory. Here, Levin (204, Note 1) points to *Nicomachean Ethics* (1140a12-14) in which Aristotle propounds the following: that the ‘thing’ comes into being, not because its ‘origin’ lies in itself, but *because of* its maker. Here, then, we see one of the teacher’s arguments influencing a student’s thinking. We see Aristoxenus understanding and agreeing with Aristotle’s argument, and applying it brilliantly.

To return now to the mathematical exigencies briefly, Aristoxenus’ ‘Science of Melody’ upholds melody as ‘continuity of motion’ (Levin, 2009: 302). Instead of straitjacketing ‘musical space to conform to the laws of mathematics’ (300), he overpowers what might be termed a mathematical ambivalence towards music. I could describe music from a Pythagorean point of view as imprecision within an ever-changing present. In contrast, Aristoxenus works from within this constantly changing present and uses reason, understood as a ‘musical type of reasoning’ (281). He created a smooth continuum of numbers (irrational and rational) for musicians (205) and in so doing, broke the Pythagorean stranglehold. He did this by using the number twelve, and splitting the whole-tone into this number of equal parts (205). No longer are intervals numerical ratios; instead, they are ‘tonal distances on the line of pitch’ (58, Note 23).³⁷ In effect Aristoxenus created equal temperament (9, Note 17).

In identifying a continuum, and that which gives the necessary flexibility to shape the melody, Aristoxenus is demonstrating the value of Aristotle’s argument as follows: the level of accuracy should accord with the subject matter (Levin, 2009: 205, Note 2, after Laloy (1904) and Bélis, 1986). Aristotle writes: ‘... one should not seek out precision in *all* arguments alike’ (*NE* 1094b13-14). And although we do not find Aristotle dwelling on a musical type of reasoning (*dianoia*), he himself must have been drawn into Aristoxenus’ thinking as it evolved. Here is a reason for including music in the curriculum - enriching the repertoire of thought. Like Aristotle, Aristoxenus is searching out ‘all that

³⁷ Levin refers to this via Ptolemy *Harm.* I. 13 (Düring, 1932).

can be said and known about a particular human activity' (Bélis, 1986: 237).³⁸ Unlike Aristotle however, Aristoxenus does not believe that music can have 'moral effects' (Bélis, 2000: 325).³⁹ In a relationship that is scarred by Aristoxenus' wounded words about Aristotle, this difference of opinion is quite telling.⁴⁰

Aristotle and the music curriculum

With this breaking new ground in mind, and understanding Aristotle's interest and empathy for music, including its potential influence on the character, I now consider Aristotle's view on music in the curriculum. Aristotle argues the following premise: '... the first principle of all action is leisure' (*Politics* 1337b32). And we should, Aristotle states, 'use leisure well' (1337b31). Nor is leisure a matter of playing, for playing is simply the opposite of working (1337b35-40). Leisure conceived as playing is not good enough. Leisure is more than this. It is threefold. It comprises 'pleasure and happiness and enjoyment of life' (1338a1-2). The latter is rendered as 'the blessed life' in Sinclair's translation (Aristotle, 1981). These three constituents are pursued for their own sake, not as a useful adjunct in a working life (1338a9-14). Fused together, they form the 'first principle of all action'. What, then, can music education contribute to this meaningful and particular type of action? Before answering this, I pause briefly to consider the relationship between leisure and the intellect.

Aristotle argues that the best kind of leisure is to be found in intellectual activity (*Politics* 1338a11). Pleasure, happiness (*eudaimonia*) and the blessed life reach their zenith through the life of the intellect. Aristotle infers that it is

³⁸ In situ this reads: << En somme, se retrouve, dans le domaine de la musique, la même ambition que celle d'Aristote: embrasser, dans un savoir scientifique, tout ce que l'on peut dire et connaître d'une activité humaine, sous tous ses aspects ... >> (Bélis, 1986: 236-237).

³⁹ Gibson (2005) chooses to interpret this differently; she thinks that it is justifiable to believe that Aristoxenus considered music to be influential morally. See the discussion on page 112 and note 88 (page 205), which centres around a debate on the interpretation of the word 'ethos' and the way it is sometimes used in the context of discussions on music.

⁴⁰ This is in contrast to Theophrastus, another Peripatetic, and who is known to have influenced Aristotle and was noted for his kindness (Levin, 2009: 100, Note 20). Aristotle had chosen Theophrastus, not Aristoxenus, as his successor at the Lyceum, hence the diatribe after Aristotle's death (Levin, 91, Note 4, after Laloy, 1904: 1-2 among others, after the *Suda* or *Suidas*).

valued for its *own* sake - not because it may be necessary or useful (1338a12).⁴¹ Indeed, it 'does not become free and exalted souls' to be 'always seeking after the useful' (1881a44). This is where music also comes in. Aristotle can see that there is a place for music in the curriculum because engaging with music can foster genuine intellectual, leisured activity. In this, he agrees with his forefathers' reasoning for including music in the curriculum (1338a14).

An education such as this forms part of the 'liberal or noble' tradition (*Politics* 1338a33). The distinction between the 'liberal' and the 'useful' sets the tone for contrasting types of education: liberal education, where the focus is on potential and enjoyment, and professional, vocational, technical education, where the focus is on knowledge and skills (Mulcahy, 2010: 307). A further point to note is that these two educational pathways are 'historically significant' (306). They continue to cast their influence today.

Already, and rather intriguingly, this raises the question of what Aristotle might make of current performing arts schools for teenagers. Ostensibly, these form a meshing together of liberal education (potential, enjoyment, continued general education) and useful education (technical know-how, intense practice, preparation for the music business). But the emphasis is on the latter. How could it be otherwise? This is their reason for existence, their niche in the market (their unique selling point if you wish). Furthermore, a performing arts school education is offered at a young age. For example, Tring Park School for the Performing Arts and Chetham's School of Music take students into their schools upwards from the age of eight.⁴² Aristotle has reservations about excessive practice, particularly for the young: for example, and in relation to physical education, injury and stunting of growth⁴³ (*Politics* 1338b11). The other aspect of concentrated effort in one domain is its one-sidedness. Aristotle states it thus. The young person becomes as an adult 'useful to the art of statesmanship

⁴¹ Here Aristotle is making direct reference to 'branches of learning and education', not the life of the intellect per se.

⁴² <http://www.tringpark.com> and <http://chethams.com> (both last accessed 18 March 2017).

⁴³ Within the context of *Politics* Book 8, Chapter 4 in which he discusses physical education it seems that Aristotle is referring to physical growth. It is possible that he might also be thinking of intellectual growth even though later in the chapter he argues against the simultaneous labour of mind and body (1339a9-10).

in one quality only' (1338b35), and even this particular quality is compromised through that of 'painful toil' (1338b41). A lack of balance is inappropriate: the mean (as introduced in the previous chapter) no longer exists.

There is another tension that becomes obvious in Aristotle's account of music in education. This is the growing gulf, even evident in his lifetime, between that of the amateur and the professional musician.⁴⁴ Marrou (1965: 209 and 213) describes for example how the beginnings of a change, starting in 5 BC, towards increasingly complicated music, led to a growing number of professional groups of musicians. (There is in *Politics* a hint of the insatiable appetite of the general public - 1342a25-27.) This matter raises a difficult question for education in the arts. As Marrou (1965: 213) perceptively notes: how should those in education react? Paradoxically, with a raised difficulty level, is it possible, indeed is it appropriate, to try to meet these standards? And if not, does this raise barriers because it is difficult to enter into the very culture of the time? To some extent there is an overlap here with the *raison d'être* for schools such as those I mention, which is to set students on the professional path. Tring Park School for example offers study of music of a particular sort: 'commercial music'.

With increasing technical demands, a gulf opens out between the amateur and the professional. Aristotle mentions the 'mechanical' side of practice. (The inference is that repetition of a particular sort is required for skill.) That he deems this dangerous is clear. Returning to gymnastics again as the context: 'And parents who devote their children to gymnastics while they neglect their necessary education, in reality make them mechanics' (*Politics* 1338b31-33). The 'mechanical' has become, pejoratively, personified.

Nonetheless, while searching for important and positive reasons as to why we should know specifically about music, Aristotle alights first on pleasure - because music affords 'amusement and relaxation' (*Politics* 1339a17). In this passage, music is almost cast in the role as a somnolent for bodily needs. Here, pleasure is removed from its conception of leisure as intellectual. The second

⁴⁴ Similar concerns are exemplified by Cook (1998: 78) when he writes that 'great' music, ('masterworks' in the Western classical tradition), becomes the province of the professional music performer. Within this context, Cook identifies Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata* as forming this defining moment.

possibility that Aristotle offers is virtue - because music 'can form our minds and habituate us to true pleasures' (1339a21-23). It can help shape the character. As previously noted, the third possibility is that music contributes to 'the enjoyment of leisure and mental cultivation' (1339a25-26) - the blessed life.

We are disabused immediately of the notion of amusement as a valid reason for inclusion of music in a young person's education. Learning carries pain (*Politics* 1339a29-30) or, as we might now say, (and perhaps more appropriately), effort. Nor is 'intellectual enjoyment' (1339a30) a valid reason at this stage of a person's development for they are not yet fully formed and are, therefore, 'imperfect'. Being imperfect, Aristotle reasons, they cannot yet achieve the *telos* or, in other words, perfection. It has to be said that it is difficult to square this, as a teenager needs to begin to gain an appetite and aptitude for intellectual enjoyment, (via debate and presentation of alternative perspectives for example). Nonetheless, Aristotle is of the opinion that to achieve the intellectual leisure described, which is the perfect end or goal, we need to be more complete (1339a30-31).

The question, then, is raised, why should the future adult, that is the citizen who according to social mores (at the time of Aristotle) will not act as a performing artisan 'unless ... intoxicated or in jest' (*Politics* 1339b9), need as a young person to learn to sing or play (1339a33-1339b10)? This question is left in abeyance, only to re-emerge in Book 8, Chapter 6.

Returning to amusement, but this time outside of curriculum matters, Aristotle is clear that music does provide amusement. Amusement in music comes in the form of relaxation. The latter is a necessary counter-balance to working hard (*Politics* 1339b15-17). It is important nonetheless not to confuse the most appropriate end as relaxation - rather, the most appropriate end is leisure (1339b31-41). The point is reiterated that contributing to the enjoyment of intellect - which is both 'noble' and 'pleasant' (1339b18) - is music. The 'noble' and 'pleasant' of this well-used leisure lead to happiness (1339b18-19).

Now Aristotle considers the possibility of the influence of music over 'the character and the soul' (*Politics* 1340a6-7). Music can inspire (1340a9-10) and it

can lead to imitative behaviour (1340a12-13). Human beings are naturally imitative. Imitation⁴⁵ begins in childhood, and we take pleasure in imitative works (*Poetics* 1448b5-10). Imitation is not only backwards looking; it also captures potentiality - the future. Notice how Aristotle interprets imitation in three ways in the following passage from *Poetics*, in which the focus is on poets as imitators. Imitating can show things as: '(1) the way they were or are, (2) the way they are said or thought to be, or (3) the way they ought to be' (1460b10). In the latter interpretation Aristotle signals clearly the possibility, and importance, of potentiality within imitative behaviour. In short, music can affect behaviour and response.

Interaction with music, (which via imitation can affect behaviour and response), engenders pleasure. A change occurs. This change we could call development. An important aspect of this development is learning to make 'right judgements' (*Politics* 1340a17). Music making involves for example, (increasingly) fine judgements about balance, control, appropriateness, and often involves interaction with other performers. As the quest is for an educated citizen who is able to make considered judgements, Aristotle seems to be making a case for the contribution that music can make. Like Aristotle, Nussbaum refers to this point about the development of judgement within the context of a citizen's choices. She writes: 'The arts⁴⁶ are important to politics for the very reason that they help people in honing their judgement skills' (Nussbaum, 1997: 85-86 after Meiklejohn⁴⁷).

And now that he has considered these many aspects, Aristotle is more comfortable with acknowledging that the pleasure that music brings can sweeten the path of learning (*Politics* 1340b15-16) - even though this is not a strong enough reason in itself for inclusion in the curriculum.

⁴⁵ *Mimēsis* can be rendered as 'mimesis', 'representation' or 'imitation', Woerther (2008: 100).

⁴⁶ Nussbaum (1997: 86) goes on to argue that of all the arts, literature makes the richest enquiry into human circumstance and problems via searching out possibilities. But for our purposes here, it is enough to consider that the arts in general can aid people's participation in political citizenship.

⁴⁷ Meiklejohn in his closing chapter in *Free Speech* (1948) reflects on the importance of judgement in political life within the context of 'freedom of political discussion' (92), with the importance of education for all underlined so as 'to think and act as self-governing citizens' (103).

And, finally, in Aristotle's view, he has made the case for the young to be educated in music. He is of the considered opinion that '... music has a power of forming the character' (*Politics* 1340b11-12).

Having achieved his point about the importance of music in the curriculum, Aristotle returns to an earlier question.⁴⁸ The question, now discussed, is: should a child learn to sing and play? And if so, why? The inference earlier is that there is a balance to be achieved in gaining enough expertise to judge knowledgeably but not to the point of the skill level of artisan, professional performer, or 'mechanic' (*Politics* 1340b33, as translated by Sinclair). In other words, (and to reiterate), the education we are constructing here is that of education for the elite future citizen (1340b42). It ought not to be excessive, nor rely on the extreme as for example, virtuosity or competition (1341b11) might. As Aristotle has already argued in *Nicomachean Ethics*, our 'characteristics come into being as a result of the activities akin to them. Hence we must make our activities be of a certain quality ...' (1103b22-23).

Aristotle is clear that it is good to channel young people's physical energy, as when he speaks about physical education for example (*Politics* 1340b26-27). Anyone who has witnessed young people's music performances will know that discernible physical energy can form an attractive aspect. Importantly, he is also of the mind that to judge others' performances appropriately (1340b25-26), students need to have participated in music making (singing and playing). But the resonance is wider reaching than that of purely musical contexts: 'Clearly there is a considerable difference made in the character by the actual practice of the art' (1340b22-23). The action, via music, is influential on the young person's future: it shapes. An education in music can provide a forum within which a young person, via (a feedback loop of) judgement and action, can begin to gain pleasure in 'rejoicing and loving and hating rightly' (1340a15). This appropriate pleasure is integral to virtue; without it, the virtuous action is conflicted (for example, *NE* 1175b22-23 and 1176a25-29).

⁴⁸ As formulated in *Politics*: 1339a33-1339b10. 'But perhaps it may be said that boys learn music for the sake of the amusement which they will have when they are grown up. If so, why should they learn themselves ... But these matters may be left for the moment.'

Care, therefore, needs to be taken during singing and the playing of instruments. The nature of music education should not be detrimental (*Politics* 1341a4-9). Character is imitated in the type of mode, melody and rhythm used (1340a38-1340b7). Specifically, we need to be mindful that certain melodies (with corresponding modes, each of which has different affects) are more appropriate for the young than others. These, categorised by ancient Greek philosophers, are: melodies of character, action, passion or emotion (1341b32-36). Some modes for example induce relaxation, others enthusiasm (1340a39-1340b5). This may seem quaint, but there is a commonly held view that Mozart for example chose the key of G minor to express extreme pathos. Music can represent in a way that other arts may not do so.⁴⁹ Nonetheless Aristotle is not arguing that what is appropriate in music education need necessarily be appropriate in other contexts, for example catharsis, intellectual enjoyment, leisure or relaxation (1341b38-1342a1). The needs here are different, and are dependent too on the stage of life. Goal-orientated as ever, Aristotle argues that throughout we need to keep the following in mind: that which ‘is possible’ and that which is ‘becoming’ (1342b18-19) or what we might term ‘appropriate’.

Forever the practical philosopher, Aristotle draws his thoughts to a close, and does so quite beautifully. He states: ‘Thus it is clear that education should be based upon three principles - the mean, the possible, the becoming [the appropriate⁵⁰], these three’ (*Politics* 1342b31-33).⁵¹

In the next chapter I investigate more recent models of music performance, and consider in relation to these, some of Aristotle’s thoughts as presented thus far. Is it possible as a developing student to become technically, stylistically and expressively musically assured within Aristotelian parameters?

⁴⁹ See Woerther (2008: 100-101) for a discussion on representation in music and its differences with the other arts in this regard.

⁵⁰ In contrast to Barnes (Aristotle, 1996), Sinclair translates ‘the becoming’ as ‘the appropriate’ (Aristotle, 1981).

⁵¹ There is some doubt about the authenticity of the passage (of which the quoted section forms the closing part), a discussion about which can be found in Lord (1982: 215-219). Nonetheless, I do not view the sentence quoted as being out of kilter with Aristotle’s argument and therefore use it as part of my discussion.

Chapter 4

The human effort of music performance

Introduction

Music requires performance. This is how we appreciate music.⁵² Particular qualities, sensory or otherwise, emerge. But, what exactly is music performance? Or to frame this question another way, what is it to be a music performer?

Until this point, I have presented the central notion of ‘music performance’ as existing without ambiguity. I will now offer a working definition of music performance, and from this, move on to tease out what it is that is quintessentially human about music performance, drawing upon some notable viewpoints. Becoming technically, stylistically and expressively assured as a music performer, takes effort. Furthermore, becoming assured in these ways is, as I wrote in Chapter 1, distinctly loaded, for becoming so is a quasi-public act. In particular, what does the very human effort involved in music performance reveal to us? It is this aspect I think that is significant and may overlap and, thus, relate to Aristotle’s working parameters of the ‘good life’.

From a general point of view, and as Pitches (2011: 3) states, the notion of performance is varied and embraces the ‘everyday and specialized cultural domains’. Seen in this way, performance can be viewed as encapsulating everything from the mundane to the ceremonial. Performance can also be viewed as if each ‘performance’ were morphing into the next: a ‘continuum’ of action (Schechner, 2013: 170-3). Perhaps at some point along this continuum something that we recognise as an artistic performance emerges. Extrapolating from these (more generalised) notions of performance, I open my discussion by defining music performance simply as expressive musical communication.

Nonetheless, however we may term it, music as such is not a ‘fixed phenomenon’ (Krausz, 1993: 2). In terms of historical contexts, music as a

⁵² I use ‘appreciate’ to capture an individual’s response to music in an all-embracing way, not scholastic or otherwise.

notion changes (2). Within societal and cultural contexts too, musical styles reflect changing ‘expressions of identity’ (Wells, 1994: 306). These are not only ‘imposed’ from external forces, but also arise from the inside out (Blacking, 2000: 98), partly as a result of an individual’s interactive structuring with the environment (98-99). Present in this is a circularity: each is said to affect the other. And as discussed in Chapter 2, the past and the present influence each other through the particular attitudes we take towards these (Wells, 1994: 301). In other words, a particular account of music (and its performance) should not be a ‘privileged’ one (Krausz, 1993: 1) even though this may turn out to be the case: whether unwittingly or not, whether deserved or not.

An example of such privileging is the account in Western classical music of music as ‘interpretation’. In fact, Davies (2011: ix) refers to this as the ‘classical paradigm’. Such is its influence that Dreyfus (2007) refers to interpretation in this particular context as metaphor. It is the means by which we approach music. The term can thus easily become shorthand for all types of musical practice (255), leading to anachronistic use. Clearly hazardous, this colours our view of types of musical practice that do not fall within its parameters. But that is not to say that (in this particular case) ‘interpretation’ does not deserve its place, at least to a certain degree. It forms, as Krausz (1993: 2) notes, a ‘central place in musical practice’. And I will return to this particular concept of music in order to consider its importance to, and demands on, the musician. For the moment though, it is enough to note the possibility of a number of music paradigms, all of which may be rich in differing ways. Nonetheless, these various accounts do make the familiar strange to better understand.⁵³

Alternative approaches to the interpretative account

I begin here by presenting a range of approaches to music performance, which Dreyfus (2007) identifies as alternative approaches to that of music performer as interpreter. These are drawn from the Western classical music tradition and are from the period leading up to or alongside the emergence of interpretation as a driving force. Each approach presents different challenges to the musician, both musical and societal. Importantly, what Dreyfus does is to open out the account

⁵³ Lehrer (2007) in his discussion about Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*, leads Sacks (2007: 211, Note 8) to extrapolate that ‘with time and repetition, the strange became familiar’.

to what can be considered as other 'stand-alone' musical approaches (for example, the virtuosic instead of the interpretative). These contribute to defining what it is to be a musician (for example, skilful). These approaches are argued by Dreyfus as being caught, erroneously, within the net of the interpretative account.

In 18th Century Europe for example, the German composer and flute player Quantz (1697-1773), amongst others, was a keen promoter of good taste or propriety. Within a specific agreed cultural practice (Dreyfus, 2007: 259), musicians were challenged to be elegant executants (258-259, citing Quantz, 1752). This 'cultural elegance' is epitomised by Quantz himself, who worked for over thirty years in the court of the flute enthusiast Frederick the Great (1712-1786).⁵⁴ Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788), in contrast, seeks to give the musician the confidence to represent the composer's emotions. That is to say, the performer is moved by the piece before the listener is in turn, so moved by these same emotions (Dreyfus: 259-260, citing C.P.E. Bach 1753 [1976: 115-133, particularly 122] from his influential book *The true manner of keyboard performance*).

In marked difference to issues of good taste or representation of the composer's emotions through a composition, Mozart is concerned with sincerity of expression via experience (Dreyfus, 2007: 260, who draws upon Mozart 1783 in Marshall, 1991: 377). Mozart (1756-1791) moves the music beyond the condition of the written musical score because, Dreyfus suggests, the quality of the music making leads to sincerity of expression (260). Dreyfus also notes the importance to Mozart of sincerity of expression when Mozart writes of a fellow musician, somewhat harshly perhaps, that Clementi (1752-1832)⁵⁵, the pianist, teacher, composer and later, piano manufacturer, lacks 'taste', 'feeling' and 'expression' (1783 in Marshall, 1991: 377). It seems that Clementi's experience was not being used to galvanise sincerity of expression, at least in Mozart's view. Quality is lacking.

⁵⁴ See entries on Quantz and Frederick the Great in Scholes (1974).

⁵⁵ See entry on Clementi in Scholes (1974).

Hoffmann (1776-1822), in contrast to Mozart, treats fidelity to the score as paramount, with this revealed as ‘impersonation’ (Dreyfus: 260-261, after Hoffmann in 1810). The musician has an ethical duty to do right by the text and therefore the composer (261). Nonetheless, I note that the quality of the music making takes us to ‘the far-off spirit-realm of music’ and that the composer, not the performer, has the authoritative voice (Hoffman, 1989: 103). The musician is in effect a conduit⁵⁶, a vehicle of transference (in this case, to the ‘spirit-realm’). Just as it may take effort to present music elegantly, representatively of emotions or with sincerity of expression, it may take effort to erase any sense of performer individuality. In today’s more obviously global world in which ‘boundaries’ can blur, erasing a sense of individuality, can be argued as counter-intuitive. Individuality expressed through a performance, may make the difference in the musical business world. Think for example of the high (falsetto) male vocal line⁵⁷ in the opening of the James Bond film *Spectre*. On various levels this is an unexpected juxtaposition of ideas and materials and psychological forces.⁵⁸ The ‘individuality’ of musical communication is essential here.

In addition to the modes of approach to music considered important and identified by Dreyfus is that of acrobatic prowess. Dreyfus refers for example to the concert in 1806 in which Clement (1780-1842)⁵⁹, the violin virtuoso, performed the premiere of Beethoven’s *Violin Concerto*, and offered the audience other daredevil musical feats. Other musicians who embody such prowess are the performer-composers Paganini, the violinist, and Liszt, the pianist. There is space here too for adulation (think again of Paganini and Liszt), and of ‘rock stars’ Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, David Bowie. I note that sometimes such virtuosity is truly part of the music. It exists beyond being ‘acrobatic prowess’. Take a recent example, that of the composer Alec Roth. During discussion of his *Suite for Solo Violin*, Roth focuses on the dual nature of technical wizardry (Seth, 2011: 16).

⁵⁶ For a later account of what is effectively musician as conduit see Chapter 1 in O’Dea (2000).

⁵⁷ The song is *Writing’s on the wall* (sung by Sam Smith, and written by Sam Smith and James Napier).

⁵⁸ The music can almost be described as ‘rough-hewn’. It is certainly not elegant in itself, but of itself it is an elegant solution to the film’s requirements.

⁵⁹ See entry on Clement in Scholes (1974).

[The] last movement was full of all sorts of shenanigans: left-hand pizzicato as well as lots of right-hand pizz, multinote chords, harmonics, the lot. And he [Philippe Honoré] played it as if all that was no problem at all - and got to the heart of the music, to the dance of it.

Explained thus, virtuosity is required for reasons beyond itself: it stands on its own to be enjoyed *and* it is part of the beating heart of the piece.

These, then, are some of the approaches that music performers take in response to particular music, all 'equally compelling' (Dreyfus, 2007: 271) or at least in part truthful to people's experience. But they became eclipsed by the increasingly dominant interpretative mode.

The interpretative account

Dreyfus (2007) identifies Europe in the mid-1840s as the turning point during which the interpretative account became dominant. He explores the historical evidence in order to understand when it gained a foothold linguistically and musically (in addition to Europe, in Britain and the United States). Whereas for instance Davies (2011) principally tasks himself with investigating whether the 'classical paradigm' can be usefully applied to performing arts in general (including a broad spectrum of music), Dreyfus is concerned with its erroneous use in (Western classical) music. Interpretation rests on the pre-eminence of the 'text', that is to say, the music score.

The metaphor of 'performance as interpretation', (Dreyfus, 2007: 265), took hold in linguistic culture, firstly in Britain and in the United States, then in (German- and French-speaking) Europe. The translation into English of *vortrag* - as used for example in Wagner's essay (1869) - shifted its original sense in German, 'musical rendition' (263) towards 'interpretation' (265). Used in the English sense, (not in the German sense, which had previously been more restricted), 'interpretation' and 'interpreter' began to make inroads in Germany (265-266). In France too, the metaphor of 'performance as interpretation' gradually took hold (266).

The use of ‘interpretation’ and ‘interpreter’ captured many practices, ranging from personal readings to more contextual historical ones (Dreyfus, 2007: 267). Furthermore, the emergent discipline of historical musicology set these two extremes on a collision course. What had previously been the area of expertise of the performer was now being shared (267) by the two disciplines. Dreyfus draws upon the renowned violin teacher Auer (1845-1930) to illustrate this colliding of paths. Auer considered the historical in a way that could almost be described as ‘flotsam and jetsam’.⁶⁰ He placed instead a premium on each generation in turn interpreting and communicating the music. This is imbued with responsibility (Auer, 1921: 143). In Auer’s view both ‘musical instinct’ and ‘freedom of conception’ are paramount (126). These give an interpretation its authoritative voice. That the ‘here and now’ can be transplanted into its past and form a bridge was not envisaged (Dreyfus, 2007: 268). The controversy between the interpretative and historical frameworks remains intact (267).

In contrast, Pablo Casals (1876-1973), the great cellist, approaches interpretation as Dreyfus describes it in terms of a quasi-religious act (Dreyfus, 2007: 268). The text demands contemplation, not as Auer believed, intuition. Nonetheless Casals takes the view that there is space for intuition. When discussing specifically the presence of intelligence and intuition during a performance, Casals responds to Corredor’s question ‘Do you think of yourself as an intuitive?’ with ‘Yes, all I do is based on intuition’ (Corredor, 1956: 187). However in terms of contemplation and the interpretation of the text this demands the reconstruction of the composer’s state of mind and, therefore, empathy (Dreyfus, 2007: 268). This lends the interpretation its authority. What gradually transpires though is Casals’ particular concern for the following - what he identifies as ‘the essential problem’: that is, ‘produc[ing] a vital creation’ (Dreyfus citing Corredor, 1956: 184). Dreyfus suggests that ‘interpretation’ does not encapsulate this experience.

Pondering further, Dreyfus argues that while authority, as defined by Auer or Casals, remains in the metaphorical sphere, this is not such a problem. What the recognition of authority does here is acknowledge the integrity with which ‘serious performances of artworks’ are constructed (2007: 271). Where the

⁶⁰ For Auer’s discussion on how to approach musical style see Chapter 11 in Auer (1921).

metaphorical becomes more insidious is when it becomes literal (271). He uses the historical musicology performance movement as an example. This is a more striking example of interpretation pitted against interpretation: authentic performance practice on period instruments (253) as opposed to current day music making. (Simplistically stated: the 'authentic' is viewed positively, the 'current' negatively.) The appeal is made with reference to some kind of authority (254) - in this case, authenticity.

In broad terms, Dreyfus notes two broad camps of 'interlocking authorities' (2007: 254): the textual or human (for example, the teacher) and the more abstract (for example, performance traditions). The experimentation and 'free play' (270), which are aspects of a performer's work, are inhibited. For some they are more than an aspect, they form a *raison d'être* - this seems true of the performances by the violinist Nigel Kennedy for example; or they form an integral feature of the music, for example jazz or, more specifically, in a concerto, that of the improvised cadenza. Paradoxically, the very piece of music that may once have been ground breaking is conceived as a matter of adherence to period style and instrumental sound (270). In noting music performance conceptualised as interpretation, (and particularly its 'stranglehold'), Dreyfus establishes a useful premise. In privileging a particular framework, he illustrates how this can circumscribe possibilities in music making, or at the very least, narrow our initial view. Aspects, such as the experiential and intuitive, are overlooked or underplayed in this dominant model of interpretation. Providing something of a counter-balance are other aspects, such as responsibility, integrity, albeit in response to authority.

An alternative view of interpretation

Dreyfus argues that performance as interpretation may actually be more helpful as a concept were we to think of interpretation as 'a stage of study and reflection *before* a musician begins to play' (2007: 271: italics as in the original). Here we may explain the content (C.P.E. Bach) or think about the composer's state of mind (Casals) and we may think about the meaning. In contrast to this stage of interpretation envisaged as preparatory work, a musician 'enact[s]' or 'becom[es]' (271) during the performance.

Cook (1998: 67) makes a point that is pertinent to the act of considering music in the manner that Dreyfus suggests. Cook refers to ‘falsification’. To ‘manipulate’ music and to ‘understand’ it, we have to remove it from its temporal existence - even though it is via time that we experience music.⁶¹ In other words, to engage with music fully, we have to ‘falsify’ it. We see this process of working towards understanding as the solo violinist, Philippe Honoré, discusses with Vikram Seth (poet and writer) a joint project (2006-2009) they had been involved with. Seth wrote the poems and the composer is Alec Roth. Here Honoré is referring specifically to a (notated) violin and piano piece composed for the fourth and final year of the project. He refers to having, in his particular case as performer, to ‘explore’ and ‘understand’ the music for oneself:

The moment I start to work on it, I begin to find things. The piece starts taking shape and grows richer and richer musically and emotionally, and this process never really stops. (Seth, 2011: 15)

Here we see evidence of temporal readjustment, and that this occurs particularly (although not exclusively) in the phase before the public performance.

Thinking of performance as interpretation as taking place at a particular stage in the process privileges preparation and possible meaning. The interpretation dwells on the act of translation because it rests on the ‘text’. In this sense the text can be said to contain some ambiguity (Dreyfus, 2007: 257): it requires some clarification. (The text may be notated or not but in the case of Western classical music it is much more likely to be fully notated than not.) Nonetheless, the text may be more ‘open’ than we thought; that is to say, the performer may move from the act of translation to one of interpretation. In the case of the written score part of this openness may be because it ‘conceals as much as it reveals’ (Cook, 1998: 77). The role of performer opens out, away from the reproductive to the creative (77).

⁶¹ Goehr (1992: 286) refers to ‘the temporal art of music’.

Viewing performance as interpretation also suggests that the text be replaced (Dreyfus, 2007, citing Sontag, 1967). There is a transformation that takes place. (I will shortly discuss re-presentation.) Whether or not we take the view that the text (the piece of music in a particular form) dissolves and is replaced by its performance (Dreyfus, 2007: 272), Sontag makes an apposite claim. She writes that the task ‘is to cut back content so that we can see the thing at all’ (1966: 14). Noting interpretation as a preparatory process contributes to the accomplishment of this task.

To take for the moment a side step, the idea that the work is replicable, that it is there to ‘dissolve’, is debatable. In an often referred to argument, Goehr (1992) refutes the notion of the existence per se of a performable work. The ‘work-concept’ (13) is by her account, spurious. She writes:

The idea of a work of music existing as a fixed creation independently of its many performances had no regulative force in a practice that demanded adaptable and functional music, and which allowed an open interchange of musical material. (185-186)

Stephen Davies refutes this (2001: 86-92), partly because Goehr chooses to base her arguments on atypical examples. He cites for example discontinuities, dependence on Beethoven’s work and lack of notational detail in pre 17th century scores. Nonetheless, David Davies (2011: 94) thinks that Goehr is correct in her argument about the work-concept in regard to the extra-musical function (for example, religious ceremony). The function for which the performance took place was crucial, and in a sense not replicable.⁶²

Whether we concede Goehr’s point or not, irrespective of the extent (or not) of replication, performance of music (or music performance) does take place. Sontag’s crisp rendering of the parameters of interpretation across the arts also provides a useful benchmark. She states the parameters thus: ‘By interpretation, I mean here a conscious act of the mind which illustrates a certain code, certain “rules” of interpretation’ (1966: 5). These take place within a narrow (or

⁶² David Davies goes on to say that it is unclear to what extent this overlaps with music of other cultures in which the function of music may be social or ceremonial for example, in other words, ‘non-artistic’ (2011: 101).

narrower) sense; the context is not broad (5). This, of course, does not preclude the issue that there are varying degrees of conscious application of the 'code'. These may range from the 'respectful' to that of 'openly aggressive excavation' (6).⁶³ These various applications reflect different values and, like Dreyfus, Sontag makes the point that 'interpretation is not ... an absolute value' (7).

It is up to me as musical gardener (so to speak) to make a decision as to how far I go in my relationship with the 'content': do I interpret as if it were 'a liberating act' or according to its converse (Sontag, 1966: 7)? In other words, I need to think carefully about where on the continuum I am working as a performer. This includes whether the respect I show is passive or aggressive, or whether I decide to build a richer notion of respect. This issue is partly what the GCSE violinist in my opening chapter was grappling with. She was learning to understand the music and to bring her (interpretative) voice to the piece. And, if I assume this is important, a curriculum (and its assessment) needs to give space for this. By doing so, it is supportive of the importance of this notion. Certainly, as a professional violinist, Honoré is cognisant of the need to take an exploratory path in order to better 'understand' the music. Sontag too makes the important point that interpretation includes 'understanding something' (9). Their reflections are supportive of Dreyfus' contention that interpretation as a stage in the process is indeed helpful (2007: 271).

Energetics of performance

With Dreyfus' account (2007) and the need for other music performance models alongside that of interpretation in mind, Gritten (2009) seeks to sketch out others that might be able to function in coexistence. Gritten does this partly by looking at the relationship between (a) ergonomics and interpretation and (b) energetics and interpretation. He casts the models within experience and intuition, not purely on analysis. It is energetics that will emerge as of particular

⁶³ The latter phrase I have paraphrased. In its original form, it reads as follows: 'For the contemporary zeal for the project of interpretation is often prompted not by piety toward the troublesome text (which may conceal an aggression), but by an open aggressiveness, an overt contempt for appearances. The old style of interpretation was insistent, but respectful; it erected another meaning on top of the literal one. The modern style of interpretation excavates, and as it excavates, destroys; it digs "behind" the text, to find a sub-text which is the true one.' (Sontag, 1966: 6)

importance in reaching a music performance model that might be described as a more ‘responsive’ one.

Gritten (2009) describes the general view of the performance framework as a relationship involving the musical work (piece) and the interpretation. By using ergonomics he sets out to analyse this relationship. The term ‘ergonomics’ derives from the ancient Greek *ergon*, ‘work’, (also ‘function’), and although ergonomics is not defined as such, the reader understands it to be the science of efficient working practice. In particular Gritten tasks himself with considering self-improvement. Ergonomics is, after all, about optimisation (156). It is about ‘best performance’. (However what the nature of best performance beyond that of optimum efficiency is or might look like is not really explored.) The idea is that the interpretation seeks to communicate (in an efficient way) and in so doing transforms the musical work (Gritten: 156 after Thom, 2000: 26).⁶⁴ Having made the point about the occurrence of transformation, Thom (2000: 26) goes on to say that this can be done in a number of ways, including how we choose to structure, select or substitute. In concrete terms, ‘The opera is given a particular slant or colour’ (27). Otherwise expressed, we re-present. (Thom refers to this as ‘representation’ (26).)⁶⁵

As noted, ergonomics concerns itself with efficiency. That is after all, its prime concern. And although musicians need to be able to (physically) make music efficiently, with the least wear and tear possible (viz. for example the Alexander technique⁶⁶), this is hardly at the forefront of the mind when performing. Gritten refers to efficiency as a tool; it is, potentially ‘a means to [an] end’ (2009: 161). Ergonomics help to prepare in the most efficient way possible. One way, then, of looking at the relationship between the work and the performance outcome is the efficient transformation of a piece of music (its ergonomic properties of note). However performing (understood as interpreting) calls for more than this: it requires (aesthetic) judgement. Gritten argues that aesthetic judgement contains the ‘energetics of ... judgement, risk, threshold, and excess’

⁶⁴ Thom (2000: 26) states: ‘Interpretation subjects its object to a noteworthy transformation’.

⁶⁵ Cook (1998: 77) argues that the ‘aesthetics of representation’ omits too much; if nothing else, it does not give potency to the role of music performer.

⁶⁶ See for example, Mac Donnell (1999).

(161). I understand these as provoking the interconnecting energies of a performance. They are crucial to the performance itself. They push beyond the preparedness. In effect, they nurture the actual performance to its completion.

Conversely, these energetics, (which can be construed as matters dealing with extremes), do not sit comfortably with ergonomics. It is unlikely that risk-taking for example features high up in the list of what it is to work efficiently. Everything in ergonomics is measurable, and the measurable defines the circumference of interactive boundary. In order to be a performer and interpreter, the musician needs to move from ergonomics to the energetics of the moment. Gritten describes this as 'pass[ing] the threshold of ergonomic intervention' (2009: 164). The performer must draw ('compel') the listener into the music via a fierce energy (163). This involves the 'excessive', partly because of the ferocity involved and partly because of the 'unknown'. It is notable that performers, in their physical demeanour alone, demonstrate this 'compelling energy' differently. For example, both Bruce Springsteen and Martha Argerich bring beguiling intensity to their performances. Sometimes their energy seems to erupt from what could be described as looking like tightly-coiled springs. Of course, the change of demeanour is punctuated by particular moments (musical or otherwise). Physical gestures are important. Even without sound, 'ordinary listeners [non-specialists] can detect a great deal of the expressive intentions of the musician' (Levitin, 2006: 210). The key thing though is that in both these cases, Springsteen's and Argerich's, this is part of 'compelling' their audience to listen - that is to say, to participate. Levitin describes us as being drawn towards a (star) musician with 'an invisible force' (211).

The particular 'energetics' identified by Gritten can be seen to capture this notion of performative energy. I have already noted that Dreyfus suggests that interpretation is the prelude to performance. Since the performer is conceptualised as moving away from interpretation towards performance, the interpretation is the known, the performance the (partly) unknown. The interpretation-work relationship is left behind, and the music making moves into another dimension (Gritten, 2009: 164). It requires energetics.

Similarly supporting the notion of ‘the moment’ or the ‘here and now’, Osborne (2000: xi) is drawn to the explanation (via philosophy and cultural studies) of artistic contextualization of experience. Osborne is keen that we engage with ‘the totality of cultural objects and practices in the present’ not that of the perfect (rarified) artefact (viii). He goes on to say that existence, both abstract and concrete (66), motivates the artist (the ‘poet’). I consider this important in relation to energetics. I explain. As an artist I can draw on experience (of existence) and make (in the fullest meaning of this word) sense of this experience; in other words: create. Gritten (after Osborne and Melrose) frames this as an impulse: ‘I must create’ (2009: 164).⁶⁷ Actually, I argue, as an artist, I have a strong drive (after Melrose, 2000: 13) *to make sense* of my experience. I create: I become.

Many performers will have, then, an affinity with this impulse to create. And within this creative action there is an understanding (voiced or not) that it may invite risk-taking. Risk-taking is an aspect of creating, of risking the excessive. It is a dynamic interplay. Risk-taking takes place during music performance, for example, by pushing the tempo, playing a phrase in a new way. The very fact of presenting a performance is also in itself a risk; it may be seen as ‘dangerous’ (almost as if one were involving one’s identity) - and this is an aspect I look at in the following chapter. Moreover, there is nothing more stultifying than playing for safety (within reason of course). The risk-taking has to be meaningful. And it forms part of what it is to be a performer. Necessarily, performing is messy. Gritten refers to it as non-linear: ‘spiral and open-ended’ (2009: 162).

Furthermore, we *play* music. The playful (and emotive) attract us (Dreyfus, 2007: 272). There is a latent energy in the verb ‘to play’. We might ask someone: “What musical instrument would you like to play?” Somewhat in contrast, Godlovitch understands the term ‘performing’ differently to that of ‘playing’. The first is more formal and specialised and the latter more general (1998: 13). The ‘formality’ is underlined too by Davies (2011: 14) who suggests that the difference between performance and (ordinary) action is the ‘anticipated evaluative attention of an intended audience’. Thus the notions of the playful (and emotive) argued for by Dreyfus (2007) are not considered by

⁶⁷ Gritten refers to two sources here: Osborne (2000) and Melrose (2007), who quotes Osborne.

Godlovitch in the same way. There is, it is argued, a certain seriousness to the event.

The skills account

I leave aside, for now, elements that can be conceived as forming the energy of the performance and turn to another aspect. A particularly important accomplishment in Dreyfus' essay (2007) is that of prising open the discussion to consider alternative 'attributes', for example, the elegant. These attributes are revealed to be 'stand-alone'. They are essential to, and characteristic of, that particular musical style or tradition, for example, the elegant playing required of a Quantz flute concerto. That is to say, such attributes do not need to be, and should not be, seen through the prism of musical interpretation conceived as the 'classical paradigm'. If appropriate to the contexts (musical and others), such attributes should be approached and valued on their own terms. I also take the broader view that these attributes can contribute to defining what it is to be a musician. For example contained within each of these is a musician who is required to be skilful and cognisant.

In broader terms, then, there is the matter of skills or skill-set required within a music performance framework. A model Stan Godlovitch (1998) identifies is specifically that of the skill-based type. Godlovitch describes this as having Socratic *technē* ('skill') at its base (1998: 4; 56). Within the skill-based model, the prime agent is very clearly the performer: skills are required to perform the music (and are required to a particular standard). At their core, Godlovitch describes skills as practical: they get the task done (55). One point to make here briefly is that skills can, of course, outweigh the value of the work itself. The artwork may be nothing but florid vacuous gestures. Skills, like virtue, are therefore never what I term 'neutral'.

With his focus remaining on the solo musician as opposed to the group or ensemble, Godlovitch (1998: 50-51) identifies three themes. These situate the working contexts for the skill-based model. Firstly, the emphasis is on the 'pre-eminence' of the performance, including its network of complex activity. Secondly, the performer delivers the music to the listener - the obligation is performer to listener, not performer to composer. Thirdly, the focus is on

performance as action not on the work itself, (the artefact). Hence, however pragmatic or not one views skills to be, what they do is to take place within this three-themed cortex.

Within this cortex, Godlovitch perceives skills as demanding the overcoming of (physical and mental) resistance and calling on the human as agent of change (Godlovitch, 1998: 60). Such agency is in contrast to O'Dea where skills are used responsibly to render the piece in its best light: 'further [its] worth and importance' (2000: 19).

With skills come authority. Skills give us a reason to 'respect ... artists, art-making, and works of art' (Godlovitch, 1998: 61). In this way, skills are thus a matter for the individual and for the community. Godlovitch argues that skills become a matter for institutions, both in terms of defining mastery (perfection) and in offering protection. Developing such skills brings together communities, what Godlovitch initially refers to as 'performance communities' (1998: 61) and later, as 'guild traditions' (76), (following on from the medieval tradition). This institutionalisation brings with it a tendency to move away from innovation to conservatism (61).

In contrast, innovation can bring with it displacement, because of the way in which (the new) music is made which may be beyond that of the traditional community's reach. There is a tension: for music to reflect on its community (society), it needs to move on - to 'provoke'. The role of the community may then become questionable, for example if its membership is fractured (possibly beyond repair). We see this even within a small community - a microcosm such as that of a band. In the case of the Beatles, different members at different points wanted to explore different music. George Harrison looked to the creative freedom: '[to] be able to think at my own speed and to have some musicians in the studio who would accompany me on *my* songs' (Roylance, 2000, 349; italics as in the original). Inevitably, there were other reasons too for the breakup. John Lennon in particular was the catalyst for the breakup. 'I started the band. I disbanded it. It's as simple as that' (348). The Beatles agreed to go or at least settle into going their separate ways. In effect, there was no longer the need for such a 'guild'. It is worth bearing this in mind since it is yet another instance in

which the music performance framework might serve better were it to capture this ability to be proactive. It would encapsulate that of being a responsive agitator towards, and within, different and emerging styles of music. To borrow a term from Goehr (1992), music is not a ‘museum’.

Godlovitch, then, argues that our relationship with music is based on more than (mere) sound. The tripartite of participants in (Western classical) music, composer, performer, listener, can mean that the performer is viewed as merely providing a functional role, that of ‘reveal[ing] the work in sound’ (Godlovitch, 1998: 3). There is then a disembodiment (3), literally and figuratively: literally, because the musician’s act of embodiment is of no particular significance and figuratively, because the relationship is weak. In the world of ‘the computer’ (106-107), the function can unravel completely to dissolution. The music plays itself.

Godlovitch comes to the conclusion that in Western classical music, performance retains its centrality. This also seems true within music of many styles and traditions. The musician has the intention to cause music, so to speak. In its immediacy, that is the performing of a work, music differs from other arts. Godlovitch writes: ‘The worth of a performance typically depends upon both the actual manner and fact of achievement’ (1998: 117). Perceiving music performance through the lens of a skills-based framework makes sense therefore. Skills can demonstrate both ‘the *need to learn* and the drive to aspire’ (Annas, 2011: 16; italics as in the original).⁶⁸ Skills are foundational, valuable, and quintessential of the task. They are demanding.

⁶⁸ Annas (2011) makes a distinction in the classification of skills; accordingly, there is a certain class of skills, what she refers to as ‘non-routine’. In itself this is a matter of debate, not least because skills take place within particular contexts. Just because a skilled surgeon has a vocabulary of ‘routine’ skills, if for example the context is demanding, does this make the skill per se a ‘routine’ one? Or, to put it another way, just because it has become second nature, does it make the skill any less ‘non-routine’? Everyone involved in the performance of Ravel’s *Tzigane* (originally for violin and piano) would expect the violinist to negotiate the (often flamboyant) skills required. Similarly to the surgeon, these skills partly epitomise what it is to be a virtuoso musician.

Personalism

By juxtaposing his understanding of the performer as human with the performer as computer, Godlovitch is better able to underline the importance of these aspects in the (directly) human offering of music performance. Thus Godlovitch (1998), like Osborne (2000), moves the aesthetic and artistic aspects of music performance into the realm of broader cultural needs. The performance environment, Godlovitch argues, brings the performer into a more personal and social realm. Construed as having many aspects, the personalism account includes the following: the significance to people of music, its role in rituals, its communicative channels and the action required (1998: 144).

Godlovitch alights on the importance of intention through considering a range of possible performance scenarios. We do not listen to music performed without a sense of its cultural context or placement - but that does not mean the work itself is changed (1998: 132). Nor do we view the performer as nothing more than the stirrer and mixer of sound into an artwork (131). If we take the view that the 'immediate performance context' (139) is all that counts, for effectively this is what the artwork is about, then we are likely to be thinking along quasi-institutional lines. The 'protocol' (139) is fabricated around 'aesthetic judgement and experience' (139). We can, of course, enlarge our view and think about other external matters (including the personal) - and what counts as 'external' varies (139) from one view to another. By being receptive to this approach which includes the 'external' as well as the 'internal', this sees us drawn towards the music performer as a person. Incorporating features that might be described as less artistic in nature, Godlovitch refers to this as 'personalism' (139).

In this personalism account we are interested in the 'messy, diffuse context of human ability' (7) as part of the convention and expectation of music performance. (As I noted earlier, Gritten (2009) referred to the non-linearity of music performance.) We attribute value to (specialist) skill, creativity and rigour (Godlovitch, 1998: 7). The music performance takes effort, and it takes place as the musician develops and lives life (140). There is celebration then of 'Oaktreeness' (Saunders, 1981: 36). The potential inherent (as discussed in Chapter 2) in the nucleus (the acorn) is fulfilled. It is celebrated because,

through flourishing, it has been realised - it has grown into itself; that is to say, it is a true version of itself. This effort reflects Dreyfus' account (2007), which identifies the experiential as significant in music performance. Music, by this personalism narrative, is 'embedded culturally and psychologically' (Godlovitch, 1998: 7) thus mirroring Blacking's point to which I drew attention in my opening pages of this chapter.

In addition, we can say that in this personalism model the performer and listener act as magnetic forces. 'In every human performance, something is at stake, something matters for all involved' (Godlovitch, 1998: 144). We are, according to Auer (1921), moved. It is perhaps a 'weak' account of music performance, but personalism does externalise aspects which are meaningful, although to a lesser or greater degree, across different music styles and traditions.

The music performer and significant others

That indeed 'something matters for all involved' (Godlovitch, 1998: 144) is substantiated by the following. Seth, in conversation with Roth, describes a music performance as 'a public act' (2011: 29). Only when this is achieved, he posits, is the piece of music 'fully realised'. In response, Roth (the composer involved in the project) muses aloud on the importance of all those involved in the piece.

You know, people assume composers can hear their music in their heads. Well, even if that's true in the abstract, it is the performers who really embody it and bring it to life - in a particular place at a particular time - and let us hear it with our real ears, not those of our minds. It's all the difference in the world. And the audience closes the circle - their attentiveness, their reactions, even the direction of their gaze. When *Songs in Time of War* was performed in Wilton Church, someone said that a veteran from the Second World War had broken down as he listened to 'Moonlit Night'. I was surprised at first, but they told me that he'd said it was exactly as it had been with him, separated as he had been from his wife by the war. (Seth, 2011: 30)

In response to this reflection, I find three aspects particularly telling in terms of thinking about music performance and what it is to be a music performer.

Firstly, there is the significance of the ‘musician’s act of embodiment’. Who the music is performed by, and where and when, contributes to the ‘difference’ made. It is not a ‘faceless’ activity.

Secondly, this reflection by Roth calls into question the second of the three themes identified by Godlovitch: that of the obligation resting with the performer to listener, not (it is implied) performer to composer. Roth demonstrates that for a piece to be ‘fully realised’, the ‘obligation’ is more networked than this. The network is that of composer to listener, that of composer to performer, and so forth. The obligation to others is significant. Implicit too is the obligation to oneself.

But, being ‘obligated’ also suggests elements of power, especially as the notion of a network is suggestive of relationships. What was in the past the classical music positioning of the pre-eminence of the composer, is toppled. Whether you agree with this or not will partly depend on how you view the authority of the composer (via the score or other means) and the way in which you should listen (in effect, what it means to ‘appreciate’ music). The ‘network’ aspect that Roth draws light towards is not only about power but also about music as an activity - and the implication of this. Cook (1998: 78) states: ‘... an approach that is based on the activity of music - of composing it, performing it, listening to it, loving it, hating it, in short, *doing it*’ (italics as in original) involves everyone. In effect, through the power of action, all are very recognisably, to use Cook’s term, ‘stakeholders’ (78). And by this account, all are musicians.

Thirdly, in my opening to this chapter, I said that if we are to appreciate music, music itself requires performing (a ‘performance’). In the description of the performance of ‘Moonlit Night’, there is a strong evocation of the notion that a performer embodies through technical and expressive skill, musical - and very human - communication. The listener, and now too the composer, is (after Gritten, 2009), ‘compelled’ to listen.

Furthermore, Dreyfus (2007: 272) describes music as having ‘emotive elements’. Along with ‘the playful’ (272) these elements are ‘music’s greatest joys’ (272). Forming part of this musical and human communication is the ability of music to arouse intense feeling, as Roth’s reflection demonstrates. When we think about the war veteran and the impact that the music performance had on him, there is concordance with Nussbaum’s point that music and the emotions may be particularly closely connected. Music, she writes, unmask our ‘urgent needs and vulnerabilities’ (2001: 254). Levitin (2006: 208) puts it differently: ‘What most of us turn to music for is an emotional experience’. Music and its effects in Nussbaum’s account arrive by stealth; in Levitin’s account, we proactively seek out music for its emotional effects. Irrespective of the route by which music enters into a life’s moment, it seems there is an essential requirement for its emotive properties.

This connection between music and the emotions (whether through needs or vulnerabilities) may, I think, explain why the lack of the emotive (arousing intense feeling) or emotion (characterised by intense feeling) in a performance is something to be noted.⁶⁹ Levitin (2006: 209) writes:

We say of lesser jazz musicians who appear detached from their true selves and from emotion that their playing is nothing more than “shucking and jiving”, attempts to please the audience through musical obsequiousness rather than through soul.

The lack of ‘soul’ or emotion forms a void. There is an eerie sense to a critique by Hewett of a piano recital he attended. Although described as projecting ‘such a sheerly beautiful sound’ (2017: 2) and virtuosic playing (3), the performance is one of ‘emotional hollowness’ (3). In pianistic and figurative terms, ‘the moment in Liszt’s arrangement of Schubert’s *Gretchen at the spinning wheel* when Gretchen remembers Faust’s kiss, went for nothing’ (3). The pianist lacks the pianistic, and human, touch of emotion. Nussbaum (2001: 265) argues that there is a need for a theory that is robust enough to deal with (among other aspects) the following individually and together: ‘the expressive properties of a

⁶⁹ The terms ‘emotive’ and ‘emotion’ are based on definitions given in Oxford Dictionaries, English <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com> (last accessed 20 May 2017).

musical work' (265) and the listener's responses. Here in Hewett's critique is a manifestation of the twofold nature of this musical and expressive (emotional) bond as sought by Nussbaum (265). First 'the expressive properties of a musical work' (in this case, an understanding through the music of a dramatic moment) and second its ability to stand apart from the response of the listener (who is, in this particular case, unmoved). Nussbaum states that the theory should be able to connect these, that is, the expressive properties and the listener's responses, lucidly. This is how important these are.

And yet there is some evidence that curriculum time is not given to the consideration of the emotive and its expression during music students' studies. It transpired during a conversation between Levitin (2006: 208-209) and a North American music school dean, that no scheduling is made available during the curriculum at that school to teach expressivity. Only sometimes (and in the final weeks of their course) will an exceptional student be given some help in this regard. But this aspect, like technical facility, draws upon the performer's resources.⁷⁰

For example the 'emotive' is not about the 'winsome'. It is deeper than this, and a complex matter. From across and within myriad music styles, eras, traditions and (social) settings, how we view different approaches to expressivity will vary. To briefly explore this issue to reveal some of its complexities, I consider two vocal examples from Western classical music. Catriona Morison (mezzo-soprano) in a feat of skilful and imaginative programming chose to finish a (competition) programme with the aria from Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas*, *When I am laid in earth*, (often referred to as *Dido's Lament*), preceded by its recitative, *Thy hand, Belinda*.⁷¹ In the second part of the aria during the high reach of the voice (bar 25 and again at bar 35)

⁷⁰ I am thinking here not only about the performer's input but the effect on others and the impact of this on the performer. I can recall for example three cases in which I was playing the piano, all performances within a home setting. Each ended up being emotionally charged. I found these to be life affirming, but also thought provoking and intensely draining.

⁷¹ Catriona Morison was one of the finalists in Cardiff Singer of the World 2017. She went on to win the coveted prize, and was also joint winner of the Song Prize. In terms of mode of communication, I listened to her performances on television, not in the concert hall itself. (I have attended concerts in the hall, including this competition.) The recording of Morison's performance of the Purcell piece in the final is available on: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0568t43>.

on the words ‘Remember me’, Morison’s voice had a raw quality. Some might describe this as ‘tired’ (this was after all, a long and sustained week of vocal endurance); some might describe this as ‘abrasive’; some might describe it as the voice displaying (at this relatively early stage of her career) ‘uneven vocal quality’. I chose to listen to it as expressing ‘raw grief’, contained but barely so. What was Morison’s expressive intention? And was it appropriate? Turning to the second of the examples, Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) is lauded for her glorious performances. Here I turn to ‘*He was despised*’ (Number 23, Air, from Part 2 of Handel’s *Messiah*). During Ferrier’s singing of this, the vibrato is, (typically of her singing style), intense or what we might call ‘weighted’, arguably almost taking centre stage. From well over half a century later, this sound (via audio recording⁷²) seems old-fashioned. And yet, it conveys such yearning synchronicity with the words. As a listener I am drawn into, what is for me and for others, this compelling account. Had I heard this weighted timbre in the performance of the same piece in April 2017 in Ely Cathedral - beautifully sung by Helen Charlston - I am confident I would have doubted the appropriateness of this technical choice of tool in the service of expressivity. The performances of the Purcell by Morison and Handel by Ferrier, depending on your viewpoints, can be variously described as containing elements of the appropriate and inappropriate. But what both of their performances do is to display expressive commitment to which (seemingly, discerning) audiences have responded appreciatively.

I think here it is pertinent to be mindful that Aristotle is clear that we need to avoid (in my words) being a charlatan, that is to fake and swindle (oneself or others): ‘For corruption distorts and causes one to be mistaken about the principles bound up with action’ (NE 1144a35-36). So ‘wearing’ expressivity, such as in the earlier mentioned ‘winsome’, is not something to emulate. (Apart from anything else, it can easily become a default position; a poor choice of habit.) This ‘posturing’ is one reason why it is important for teachers to carefully resist a student’s wish to learn a particular piece that is inappropriate in its particular expressive demands for the student at their particular stage of development. As noted in Chapter 3, this carries with it echoes of Aristotle’s

⁷² The recording of Ferrier’s performance of the Handel piece is available on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qH3E64G0oCI>.

view that particular music differs in appropriateness for inclusion in the curriculum. In the following example in which such a request is made, we are cognisant that both of the student's violin teachers, Kyung Chee and Dawn Harms, were very aware that their student needed to perform with more emotion. Stewart (2018) describes the request by Eric Sun to learn Brahms' *Violin Sonata Number 1 in G Major*. His teacher at that point, Chee, rightly decided that its emotional depths would be too much for Sun. Fast forward several years (and during serious life circumstances for the student), Chee identified this learning period as an apposite one in which to tackle this piece. After a period of sustained, critical and a more open approach to violin study, this time as a mature adult, we are made aware that Sun would no longer be wearing the piece's expressive properties (and potentially misapplying these elsewhere) but inhabiting these with appropriate skill and degree of judgement.

Such 'principles' of action, for example habituation, skill and judgement, become helpful in signposting appropriate and inappropriate expressivity, both as performer and listener. And what this exploration of these examples also does is to go some way to demonstrating how crucial to music performance the appropriate level of expressivity to the particular music is and how, in turn, it can inform and, indeed, form us. (For example, are we appropriately flexible, open-eared and curious?) Its complexities are many but their successful resolution reveal important affinity with characteristics of Aristotelian virtue.

It might be sanguine to address this aspect, that of expressivity, at all levels and in all types of institutions. By including expressivity explicitly, teachers and their students stand more chance of developing a dialogue (musically and academically) about this. Assuming that we concur that the 'expressive' is linked to the emotive and emotion, this term should be included in assessment criteria. And, as in Alec Roth's rhetorical question: 'To know that your music has moved someone so deeply, what could be a greater reward?' (Seth, 2011: 30).

The Aristotelian importance of music performance as human effort

To turn now to Aristotle specifically, would he recognise these performance frameworks? There is a chance that he might. For, as Cook (1998: 79) argues, ‘music of one time and place’ can fulfil the ‘musical needs, desires, and aspirations’ of those of another.⁷³ We do, after all, choose particular pieces from the past for weddings and we fuse music, for example the Urban Soul Orchestra working with a DJ (Dex, 2017). Aristotle was also aware that music evolved. So, assuming he were to recognise these music performance frameworks, would Aristotle consider any as more or less legitimate ways in which to participate in music?

As Dreyfus (2007: 272) makes clear, these various accounts of music performance while sometimes in tension with one another, reveal possibility. These are conceptual frameworks that are versions of the truth of music performance. They are ways of looking into the ontological world of the music performer and their work. But they all draw upon human resources and characteristics. (This is mostly implicit - but is present nonetheless.) In music performance effort is required on a number of different levels: technical, sometimes virtuosic, stylistic and expressive. The effort is also expended in a variety of performance contexts, each with its own demands. And the effort required is a key part of what it is to be human. Effort is in this sense personable. The exploration of music performance frameworks reveals above all the effort that the music performer takes - similarly, they pay extraordinary attention to what they do. They react to the world; and, in effect, they create a world.

Nevertheless, there is a tension in Aristotle’s own account which requires resolving. He does not wish a young person (albeit of good social standing) to become a labourer or artisan and yet he is keen for us to appreciate human life. But if human life is to flourish, people need to work in tandem with their strengths (Rath and Harter, 2010). And these can only be revealed by effort. (Clearly, and as already noted, external factors also play their part: such as luck, in the form of exposure to a particular musical instrument and supportive

⁷³ This partly captures the impetus behind the component in the IB Diploma Music course, that of the *Musical Links Investigation*.

nurturing for example.) So, if effort directed towards particular activities equates with labouring, then it would seem that no music performance framework is legitimate in Aristotelian terms. He has already made it clear in *Politics* that the practising of music is to be recommended only up to a certain point. The professional musician is not a ‘freeman’: a professional is ‘a paid performer’ (*Politics* 1341b14). The ‘spectator’ (note the nuance, not listener) ‘makes [the performers] what they are’ (1341b15-17). There is, though, a degree of incongruity on display here. Firstly, as important as music education is argued to be, those working with the young citizens would remain paid professionals. We assume this is the case if they are to have the appropriate standing in terms of musicianship let alone pedagogical expertise. Secondly, without work the full realisation of the various capabilities of the particular instrument will never be reached. This is true of the individual instrument in an individual musician’s hands and in the development of the instrument on a more general level. We have to believe that the instrumentalist is not the slave of a fashioned piece of wood or metal (or indeed, electronics). Thirdly, without work a person’s particular strength or aptitude may not be realised. This may also affect a life-long interest as an amateur. In both the second and the third cases, the *telos* is not reached. That is to say, the essence of what makes something or someone (partially or fully) is not realised.

Nonetheless, and putting aside the notion of labourer, I would argue that one particular framework is more pertinent than others, both in Aristotelian terms and in current times. Underlying the personalism conceptualisation of music performer is emphatically that of the person: the music performer as human. Aristotle is concerned enough to debate ‘the philosophy concerning human affairs’ (*NE* 1181b15) in both *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*. What the person *does* actually matters. Personalism (Godlovitch, 1998) nicely draws upon the energetics required of a performer or, more simply, what Casals referred to as ‘vitality’ (Corredor, 1956). It does not preclude thinking about or detract from interpretative aspects, be these stylistic, historical or other. Responsibility is still required, not least towards the ‘code’ (Sontag, 1966). But it need not lead to the privileging of an account or responding anachronistically. It also takes on board the possibility of the interpretative as preparatory work. Framed in this way, the human work that takes place within, probably, most music styles and

traditions can be captured. With this caveat in mind, this is true irrespective of whether or not the musical focus is on the performer, the occasion or the setting (or indeed, any other manner of context).

Whilst a music performance model offers particular contextual parameters of investigation and imagination, it cannot possibly entertain all of our human impulses to engage with music and in diverse contexts, for some are (after Blacking, 2000) probably unknown. It can, though, reflect what we consider is of importance when we think about what it means to be a music performer *and* to be a human being. For, all of us are involved.⁷⁴ I argue therefore, that the personalism framework for music performance is significant for its required effort. Effort requires action. And as Aristotle makes clear, our actions are what make us. Music making of this kind draws heavily upon our resources as a human being. Those involved in educating music performers need to make this evident to their students. The effort is creative, challenging and can be in the eudaimonistic sense, life-affirming. For, in the end, what we do we are.

⁷⁴ Following the arguments by Cook (1998) and Godlovitch (1998).

Chapter 5

Courage: virtue and music performance

In this chapter I discuss the relevance of courage in music performance. First, I will analyse what the Aristotelian virtue of courage is and its importance, including any underlying relationship with other virtues. Second, I will consider whether or not courage is a feature in music performance. Third, I will investigate whether some of the various ‘shadings’ of courage in the 21st century can really be deemed courageous by Aristotle’s account, and whether this matters. Can we usefully draw upon Aristotle’s parameters, but move on? Finally, using courage redrawn, I consider whether courage in music performance is of particular relevance to a music performance model which privileges the person, including their vitality - and why this is important.

I begin by taking a step back. In Chapter 2, I made the point that a definitive list of virtues does not exist, although commonalities do emerge. I also stated that I am not seeking to construct such a list. It is enough to note that virtue exists across centuries and cultures: arguing about the inclusion or not of a particular attribute may draw our attention away from the concept of virtue and its place in our lives. Nonetheless, there is the sense that without one virtue in particular, courage, there is a fault-line running through or, at the very least, threatening to develop, which makes other virtuous dispositions fragile. McCain puts it like this: ‘without courage all virtue is fragile’ (2004: 38-39 in Southwick and Charney 2012: 73). If this is the case, it makes sense to consider whether or not music performance requires courage, and what this might look like within the world of music performance: in short, its relevance.

What is Aristotelian courage?

In approaching Aristotle’s thoughts on courage, we note how the ancient Greek language reveals the cultural context. ‘*Andreia*’ is related to ‘*anēr*’ - a ‘man’. ‘*Andreia*’, ‘courage’, can therefore also be translated as ‘manliness’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 307). From this understanding we can move on to consider a courageous man to be a particular person: a ‘warrior’. Envisioned like this, we

can see that courage stands out: it is a mark of an extraordinary person. And, as in the case of the warrior, there is a clearly a 'battlefield' upon which this mark is made.

But for courage to emerge there has to be something else in the mix - fear. We can interact with fear by being too fearful (cowardly)⁷⁵ or by being too fearless (rash); or, we can act appropriately, that is to say, courageously. In the case of fearlessness, we can say that there is no obvious interaction with fear - it is not recognised by the protagonist. Aristotle notes that the characteristic of excessive fearlessness is 'nameless'. Instead, the over-confident person is 'reckless' (*NE* 1107b1-3). And in Chapter 1 of this dissertation we have already seen both in *Whiplash*: recklessness from the teacher and fearfulness from the music student. The teacher pushes the student to the extremes of perfection; the student is intimidated into taking particular excessive action. In turn, fearfulness becomes and is expressed by reckless behaviour on the part of the student. Thus, if a person 'generally fears nothing but advances toward all things' they become reckless. Conversely, if a person 'avoids and fears all things and endures nothing' they become a coward (1104a20-23). Courage is, therefore, obliterated by 'excess and deficiency, but ... preserved by the mean' (1104a25): courage is 'a mean with respect to fear and confidence' (1115a7-8). This account of Aristotle's therefore privileges an action that demonstrates balance between fear and over-confidence.

Because courage leans towards fear rather than over-confidence, Aristotle looks at that which may be considered as engendering fear: 'disrepute, poverty, sickness, friendlessness, and death' (*NE* 1115a11-12). Having worked through these examples, he identifies the fear of death as solely that which demands courage. Note how, already, this calls for judgement. Rather than trying to apply the notion of courage to these other situations (demanding as for example poverty may be), courage is that of giving, if necessary, one's life.⁷⁶ However, Aristotle is not in the business of manufacturing opportunities: as he says,

⁷⁵ This can include that of 'boldness and defiance', only for the person to crumble at the last minute (Broadie, *Philosophical Introduction*, 2002: 24).

⁷⁶ Here Aristotle is assuming that such situations are not due to 'vice or one's own doing' (*NE* 1115a15-19).

‘nobody chooses to wage war ... for the sake of waging war’ (1177b9-10). He hints at the person of right mind, not the despot or ‘bloodthirsty’ (1177b11). In a nutshell, courage is not about the useful, it is about the ‘admirable’.⁷⁷

Having been awakened to the situation and the opportunity for action, the individual needs to appraise: the ‘what’, the ‘way’ in which, the ‘when’ (*NE* 1115b16-17); and to recognise the ‘opportune moment’ (1104a9 and 1096a28) and what there is about it that is important. (We can, momentarily, here visualise a performer stepping on stage.) Furthermore, the goal (which provides the motive for action) needs to be correct. Aristotle provides a catalogue of inappropriate motives in respect to courage (*NE* 3, 8). Broadie (Commentary, 2002: 324) refers to these as the ‘five false forms of courage’.⁷⁸ The catalogue can be presented as follows. Firstly, there is that of fear of incurring penalty, reproach, shame or lack of honour (civic duty) and ‘compulsion’ (1116b3), the fear of punishment compelling one to act. Secondly, there is courage, so-called, based on experience. However, when the new experience is overcome by events (for example being outweighed on the battlefield), any ‘courage’ dissipates. Thirdly, the motive to act courageously may be engendered by thoughts of pain or anger (brutish). Yet, with appropriate choice and the right goal Aristotle argues that this motive can lead to courage (1117a5-6). Fourthly, the sanguine person is discounted as courageous. Traits of optimism on account of previous victories - ‘of good hope’ (1117a10), provide us with a more feeble character: under duress, ‘they flee’ (1117a16). Fifthly, there is that of the ignorant person. In contrast to the sanguine, who at least ‘remain in their station for some time’ (1117a24), the ignorant, perceiving that things are different to how they supposed, simply ‘flee’ (1117a25).

⁷⁷ In *On Rhetoric*, (1366b 6), Aristotle describes courage as useful to others. ‘Since virtue is defined as an ability for doing good, the greatest virtues are necessarily those most useful to others. For that reason people most honour the just and the courageous; for the latter is useful to others in war, and the former in peace as well.’ The argument is more nuanced in the later discourse, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

⁷⁸ In terms of the actual categorisation, Broadie (2002) interprets this differently to the analysis by Pakaluk (2005: 165) and the translation by Peters (*NE*, Book 3, Chapter 8) for example. I favour that of Peters (and Pakaluk). Aristotle provides a summative thumbnail sketch to illustrate the various categories and these make more sense as expressed by Peters and Pakaluk. But for the purposes of my argument, it is helpful (and suffices) to refer to the motives identified by Aristotle using Broadie’s succinct descriptor ‘five false forms of courage’.

In his discussion of the fourth motive, that of ‘optimism’, Aristotle identifies the difference between those who are prepared in ‘unforeseen dangers’ (1117a21) and those who are not. Whereas the former are of right disposition, the latter are not. The following, taken from the current day, illustrates this important connection between courage and preparedness:

It appeared to be a moment for which Officer Scata⁷⁹ had been mentally preparing for all his life, living up to the motto he had chosen for his Facebook page: ‘Fear is a reaction, courage is a decision.’ (McKenna and Chazan, 2016: 4)

In other words, Scata was showing through mental preparation, (and we have to assume that this mental preparation involved thinking about his experiences and actions) an appropriate degree of readiness for action. This is different to simply ‘wading in’ on the tide of optimism based on previous encounters. There is, though, an argument that having had the ‘luxury’ of preparation, any resultant action does not count as courageous. This is illustrated by the following.

In January 2009, in response to a potentially catastrophic incident, Captain ‘Sully’ Sullenberger, with First Officer Jeff Skiles, safely brought US Airways Flight 1549 to rest on New York’s Hudson River. All passengers and crew survived. In the aftermath, one of the things Sully had to do is to deal with people’s perceptions of the ‘heroics’ involved and reflect on these perceptions. He writes:

... We did our best, we turned to our training, we made good decisions, we didn’t give up, we valued every life on that plane - and we had a good outcome. I don’t know that “heroic” describes that. It’s more that we had a philosophy of life, and we applied it to the things we did that day, and the things we did on a lot of days leading up to it. (Sullenberger and Zaslow, 2016: 261)⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Scata was one of two Italian policemen who (subsequently) apprehended the (alleged) perpetrator of the attack on the Berlin Christmas market (December 2016). Whether training can always lead to a courageous action is, of course, another debate to be had.

⁸⁰ The importance of the role of training in such situations is also underlined by Peterson and Seligman (2004: 28). They note that in demanding and specific situations such as these, ‘the

In discussing this quandary, Sully explains more fully:

There were those who wrote to say they agreed with me: I am not a hero. I appreciated the ways they spoke to me. They wrote to say that preparation and diligence are not the same as heroism.

“In your interviews, you seemed uncomfortable being called a hero,” wrote Paul Kellen of Medford, Massachusetts. “I also found the title inappropriate. I see a hero as electing to enter a dangerous situation for a higher purpose, and you were not given a choice. That is not to say you are not a man of virtue, but I see your virtue arising from your choices at other times. It is clear you take your responsibilities seriously. It is clear that many of the choices in your life prepared you for that moment ...

I do not mean to diminish your achievement. I just want to point out that when the challenge sounded, you had thoroughly prepared yourself.”
(264-265)

This sentiment seems to echo through the centuries. Aristotle writes:

Hence it also seems that it is more courageous to be fearless and calm amid unforeseen dangers than amid those that are clear beforehand: the former reaction would depend more on one's characteristic, since fearlessness in the face of such unforeseen dangers would stem less from preparation. In the case of foreseen dangers, a person would make his choice on the basis of calculation and reason, whereas in the case of sudden dangers, he would choose in accord with his characteristic.
(*NE* 1117a19-23)

However, Peterson and Seligman (2004: 28) make the point that such actions take place ‘despite fear’. This is key. The point is that the disposition to choose to act courageously stems from habituation and experience. These are in

appropriate way to display a strength needs to be articulated, trained as needed, and of course rewarded. We have interviewed firefighters, for instance, and found that valorous individuals report that the requisite skills for doing their job despite fear have been so overlearned that they are automated’.

themselves to some degree choices. To act courageously, whether more or less, we are cognisant that at a defining moment various aspects must coalesce, be this training, professional judgement, resilience or other forms of mental or physical prowess.

In apposition to the ‘false forms of courage’ (Broadie, Commentary, 2002: 324) is that which is ‘admirable’. This is death at its ‘noblest’ (NE 1115a30): that seen on the battlefield – for the battlefield is a site of the ‘greatest and noblest danger’ (1115a31). This according to Aristotle is the noblest kind of death because the individual’s courage is in defence of his society (1094b7-10) and, as a consequence, is honoured by cities and monarchs (1115a22-23). To understand more its essence and, hence, impact on Aristotle’s thinking, it is valuable to note that the ancient Greek term *kalos* encapsulates that which is beautiful, physically and morally, and is what we might call ‘fine’. It is often translated as ‘noble’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2010: 312 and 318). Another possible translation is ‘admirable’ (Broadie, 2002: 84, Note 99). Pears (1980: 174) calls the heroic ‘the internal goal’; in contrast, he refers to death as a ‘countergoal’ (174). The countergoal of death is according to Aristotle, a natural and appropriate object of fear. The person who (appropriately) fears death may still be described as courageous.

It is at this point of Aristotle’s discussion that we witness a conflation of virtue (in this instance, the virtue of courage) with that of a noble act (dying for one’s people). Aristotle may be thinking here that the concept of virtue and importance of its *telos* (nobility) is more easily explained by using courage as an illustration. We might ask if this is why we show confidence and face up to fear – that it involves something worthwhile (noble). Is a ‘noble’ act the goal of every virtue? It is here that Aristotle extracts a general point: ‘the end of virtue’ is ‘for the sake of the noble’ (NE 1115b13-14). It is not the particular, (in the case of courage, the sacrificial aspect that we may be in awe of), but the recognition of the opportunity (whether expressed via courage or via another of the virtues) for nobility. Neither is it that the opportunity offers virtue, and that is why the individual reacts; rather it is the disposition with which the individual may choose to approach the situation. This is what makes it possible to identify the action as virtuous. The person reveals a care for, and sensitivity to, *kalos* as an

implicit part of virtuous action (Pakaluk, 2005: 157-158). With the appropriate disposition enacted, the individual is achieving something fine for his city-state *and* for himself. To reiterate, the virtue is chosen for its own sake (*NE* 1115b22) and as part of one's disposition and character. There is something recognisably fine in this, hence why we can concur that 'nobility' forms part of virtue.

That Aristotle begins his investigation of the individual virtues with the virtue of courage may be for several reasons. As one of the four virtues identified by Plato⁸¹, Aristotle is in agreement with his teacher - although Aristotle also extended this list. As a virtue whose context is war and the very heat of the battle, courage stands out. It is an act that is both of the individual and of the community. Those partaking in Aristotle's lectures, (who were generally men of a certain social strata), could easily relate to this. Courage is a particular outcome of thought, character and action (*NE* 3.1-5) - and a dramatic event in Aristotle's account. Nonetheless, the fact that Aristotle chooses to investigate courage first does not necessarily indicate that courage upstages all other virtues. It may serve to illustrate more than itself (as evidenced by the discussion of nobility).

Moreover, it is important to note that Aristotle's account is pluralistic⁸² in comparison to Plato's and Socrates' (Broadie, *Philosophical Introduction*, 2002: 22). Nonetheless, in Aristotle's case each virtue within this notion of pluralism is investigated as offering a 'distinct kind of opportunity for the cultivation and exercise of the excellence proper to it' (Broadie, 2002: 22) and forming part of a continuum - that is to say, an appropriate 'mean' for action. It does not follow that all the virtues are reductive to courage; but it does mean that it is important as a through-line in life. In the life of a performing musician for example, misplaced action, whether through fear or rashness, and masquerading as courage, may have a detrimental effect on the possibility of a life well lived.

⁸¹ The 'perfectly good' city is, Socrates says in Plato's *The Republic* (1992), '... wise, and brave, and temperate, and just' (Book 4, 427). [Stylistically, Socrates' words are cast as a rhetorical question.] Specifically, Plato investigates the nature of bravery or courage in *Laches*. Woodruff (2016) describes this work as 'unique among ancient writings about courage ... [it] takes courage far beyond the battlefield, seeking a definition for courage not only in war but also in seafaring, in illness, in poverty, and in politics'.

⁸² This is an aspect I refer to again in the next chapter when considering the role of practical wisdom.

But, of course, different situations may call on different virtues. With these points in mind, I turn to courage in music performance.

Is courage a feature of music performance?

At first glance it seems odd to even contemplate that (appropriate) courage could be consistent with our good - our eudaimonistic life, let alone relevant to music performance. Courage is demanding, and may be unsettling. Courage may require looking death in the eye. Why, then, would we expect a music performer to demonstrate courage?

Is it too much of a stretch to accept that courage may occur in different walks of life? Is courage only the province of the warrior? This does not seem to reflect the 'commonplace' or what Aristotle might call, 'saving the appearances'. Aristotle is always at pains to consider the phenomena (*phainomena*).⁸³ Part of this process is to pay due attention to views or opinions (*doxa*) expressed on the matter. Nonetheless, such views range in stature. And whether or not the views on these are endorsed forms an essential part of the philosophical investigation.⁸⁴ So, instead of fighting for one's comrades, friends, community as in Aristotle's presentation of the virtue, the music performer is fighting (drawing on her internal resources) to share and present to her audience. This notion of performing as fighting is also difficult to self-report on, an aspect I refer to in the next section of this chapter. Is the music performer's motive 'fine'? Or is simply moving the metaphor of the battlefield too simplistic?

In being asked what advice would he give to an aspiring musician, Charles Dutoit, the conductor, replied: 'To have a lot of courage ...' (Burton, 2016: 18).⁸⁵ Dutoit also places this within the longer-term context of inevitable discouragements met along the way. Courage is required to

⁸³ Phenomena are 'literally, "the things that appear" or "come to sight"', (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 136, Note 5).

⁸⁴ ... after positing the phenomena and first raising perplexities about them, one ought in this way to bring to light especially all the received opinions about these experiences or, failing that, the greatest number and most authoritative of those opinions. For if the vexing questions are solved and the received opinions remain standing as well, then the matter would be adequately explained (*NE* 1145b2-8).

⁸⁵ Within the context, the 'aspiring musician' is understood as performer; the discussion though can be understood as aspiring performer or composer.

practise a lot. It's a long journey so don't be discouraged by the difficulties of a career which obviously can exist at every stage. Then, if they are good enough and have enough will to succeed - not in the sense of becoming famous but in the sense of mastering their skill - then they should keep going and never give up. (18)

Here we have the idea of tenacity or willpower and motivation, as well as the importance of skill. 'But people are sometimes discouraged because it's not so easy. There are so many people in the market now and obviously not everyone can hit the front page' (18). Here we have a similar understanding to that of Aristotle, the acknowledgement of external goods, for example luck, (often expressed as 'I was in the right place at the right time' or 'a lucky break'). In Dutoit's analysis, then, there is a sense of courageous tenacity. The tenacity, that is to say a courageous slow-burning approach to one's development as an aspiring musician, can explain Dutoit's initial use of the quantitative: 'To have a lot of courage' (18). Akram Khan, the choreographer, echoes this need for courage over a protracted period. Of the two aspects that Khan considers as integral to his artistic development, the second is 'having the courage to continue and grow' (Khan, 2016: 4).⁸⁶ The inference is that this should take place both as person and as artist.

Both Dutoit and Khan use the verb 'to have' in referring to courage. Implicit within this context, that of the growth of a young artist, is the notion of having to do something to foster courage. Both Dutoit and Khan's accounts, positive in nature, would seem to be supported by Aristotle's (arguably more negative) account. Aristotle argues that if we avoid and fear things - and do not learn endurance - we become a coward (*NE* 1104a20-21).⁸⁷ It is noteworthy that we are not born a coward, but can become one. In respect of this last point, Rees (2008: 17) refers to noting, however unclearly at the time itself, a feeling of being 'an absentee' from his own life as a kind of 'stifling'. Now an adult, he

⁸⁶ Khan: 'Looking back, I feel that there were two components that have been an integral part of my artistic development. The first one was hard work and dedication and the second was having the courage to continue and grow' (2016: 4).

⁸⁷ Aristotle, in this passage, is referring to all virtues - not only courage. We can back off from one virtue and not another; or, we can grow towards one virtue and not another.

struggles at last to summon up courage to perform adequately on the French horn, an instrument he played in his youth. In this way he finds himself.

Another type of courage emerges within musicians' accounts: stylistic. (I work with this term as showing musicianship and intellectual capability.) For a number of reasons, Beethoven can be regarded as a courageous musician. These include his *Heiligenstadt Testament* and his music, which pushed the boundaries. The *Heiligenstadt Testament*, Beethoven's last will and testament (1802), is a searing portrayal of 'why he was as he was' (Suchet, 1996: 599). With increasing (and indelible) deafness came the anxiety that he might no longer be able to compose. This was despair: composition was at the heart of his identity. Could he continue living? In the postscript of his fictional biography (Volume one), Suchet makes this observation about Beethoven: 'To continue living, determined to compose, was in my view by far the braver choice' (611). In parallel with this personal courage, Beethoven is revered for pushing the boundaries of music. Grout and Palisca for example describe Beethoven as 'one of the great disruptive forces in the history of music. After him, nothing could ever be the same ...' (1996: 560). The struggle of forces within his *Ninth Symphony*, the *Choral*, could be said to mirror this (structured and resolved) turbulence. All is painstaking, but for a reason.⁸⁸

In addition, the pianist and conductor, Daniel Barenboim (2013), believes that in themselves, the understanding and performance of Beethoven's pieces requires courage. He gives Beethoven's use of dynamics as an example: (at times) their abruptness, specifically the immediate cessation of a crescendo (a passage of increasing volume) by a sudden quiet passage (*subito piano*). The courage that is involved for the performer is explained (elsewhere) by Barenboim, as follows:

It's much easier not to take the crescendo right to the end, so as to prepare yourself comfortably for the *subito piano*. Going right to the end is like going to the edge of a precipice. The easy option is not the best. (Church, 2008)

⁸⁸ See Boyden (1971: 286-292) for an excellent survey of Beethoven's pushing of musical boundaries, be these structural, use of instrumental and vocal forces, exploration of tonality or other.

By considering stylistic understanding and the courage this may demand, it becomes clearer to see how important it is that space is given in which to learn to take responsibility for interpretative control. I think here of the IGCSE violin student in Chapter 1 who was courageous enough to construct her own interpretation. Her teacher too was courageous. She knew that this performance was part of a 'high-stakes' assessment submission. Furthermore, along with Barenboim's consideration of courage as represented by stylistic considerations, Dutoit, Khan and Rees, in the company of Aristotle, note that courage needs to be practised over a period of time. Otherwise, we may shrink from being courageous, rather than grow towards it.

I personally enjoy performing Beethoven's *Piano Sonata in D Major, No. 7, Opus 10, No. 3*, and particularly its slow movement (*Largo e mesto*). Beethoven deploys crescendo here, built up over very long passages and contrast of dynamics, and this leads to music of incredible intensity. Prior to reading Barenboim's accounts, I had not thought of performing this as requiring courage. But I recognise now that stylistic control - and intensity in performance - do both require courage: you are, after all, committing yourself. The difficulties are exemplified in the following analysis. Edward Dusing is a member of the renowned Takács Quartet, and he writes in relation to the *String Quartet, No. 13 in B flat Major, Opus 130*: 'Beethoven conjures up a level of emotional turmoil that can jeopardise the physical and mental control required to manage the considerable technical demands of the music' (2016: 205).

Intensity is part of the 'hold' that music can have. It can be intellectual and is also visceral in nature. I remember well the intensity at these gigs: Richard Thompson (Wickham Festival, 2012) and the Peatbog Faeries (Wickham Festival, 2013). Their stylistic wizardry and communication, partly issuing from intensity, were second to none. With Thompson, songwriter, guitarist and singer, and a former co-founding member of the band Fairport Convention, it is the sometimes raw and 'honest' but intimate style of musical communication that brings this about. In contrast, the Peatbog Faeries, a fusion band, work up music of real sweep and power, using an eclectic mix of musical influences, particularly Celtic. A different route to achieving intensity is, of course, perfectly possible. In discussing with Said (Barenboim and Said, 2002: 146-147) the work of the

orchestra, the Staatskapelle Berlin, Barenboim describes the musicians as approaching music⁸⁹ with awe and courage. He describes this as an unusual combination; and, the two together gives ‘fantastic intensity’. Taken out of context, it sounds grandiose perhaps. But for my purposes, here, what is useful is that Barenboim is of the opinion that awe can engender ‘fear and inactivity’, that is to say, passivity; and courage, which can be ‘almost self-gratification’, is active. By this account it seems that courage has severed links with fear.

Another way to look at whether courage is a feature of music performance is to consider fear of performance, more commonly referred to as ‘stage fright’. If stage fright exists, then this is a fear, which may or may not be worthy of a courageous response. To use Aristotle’s terms, we wrongly identify it as an object of fear. On the other hand, it may be a perfectly reasonable, if not extreme form of preparation for music performance. It certainly exists: think of the singers Adele, Robbie Williams, Kiri Te Kanawa, Renée Fleming, and the actor Laurence Olivier, all of whom have described themselves as having experienced stage fright. It can also occur during the performance itself.⁹⁰

There are those in education who are aware of a paradox. The school counsellor at the Brit School aptly notes: ‘Often the pressures of performance ... are what the students find the most invigorating. It’s a double-edged sword. The thing they’re pursuing is also their downfall.’ (Johnson, 2011: 19). It is easy to see how stage fright for example may take hold.

Breaking through is described as challenging. The effects can be ‘debilitating’ (Fleming, 2004: 105). For example, Rees (2008: 246) refers to losing control of his body. ‘Opera singers are rightly terrified of fear, because by affecting our relaxation it undermines our breathing’ (Fleming, 2004:100). Embroiled in this too is the fear of ‘losing [one’s] identity as a singer’ (108). Fleming describes it: ‘Stage fright makes you feel as if you will die if you go out on the stage’ (109). Hence this extreme drama, played out in a different environment to that of the ancient Greek battlefield, is an important one. It seems an appropriate

⁸⁹ Barenboim and Said are discussing this matter in relation to symphonies by Beethoven, including the *Eroica*, the Fourth and the *Choral*.

⁹⁰ See for example the Teaching and Learning Research Briefing on musical performance anxiety (MPA) (2008).

deployment of courage to work on overcoming stage fright. As a serious and committed music performer and as a human being, it makes sense to be 'healthy, glad, and whole' (110).

It is the case though that the exposure is self-chosen: 'it goes with the territory' so to speak. The music performance requires presentation in public: technically, expressively, a performer gives of their character. This is one reason why the opportunities for student and young professional performers need to be handled in both a pragmatic and sensitive manner. Students need to become accustomed to its challenges in a healthy way. The teenage cellist mentioned in Chapter 1 becomes a subject of concern. During the performance, stage fright has come to dominate the music making - and she stops. She clearly loves playing the cello. But what she is doing has become a 'double-edged sword'.

Somewhat in this vein, the pianist and composer Stephen Hough (2014: 2) refers in a magazine article to looking beyond 'our ego'.⁹¹ Thinking of 'performance as communication, as sharing, as healing' and as inspiration, entertainment, emotion, the performer can 'take the audience on a journey across the high wire of Beethoven ...' (3). To get there the musician may need to bypass the illogical imagination that is stage-fright ('anxiety') and 'heroic[ally] challenge ... the demons within'. This allows 'greater energy and concentration' (2), something we might refer to as making the most of carefully contained adrenalin. In this way we meet the perceived 'danger on stage' (2). Emerging here is an Aristotelian sense of the 'noble'. Something fine is being created for the individual and for the audience. Together, we 'inhabit the drama' (Dusinberre, 2016: 32).⁹²

The 'high wire' encapsulates the risk-taking aspect that music making can sometimes be. In this case, I am not thinking of the 'reckless' action. Rather I am thinking of that which is measured and for good reason, and which leaves some kind of worthwhile gain. For example, Barenboim (2008) contrasts

⁹¹ There is a whiff here of the 'self-gratification' that Barenboim alluded to but in the reverse direction: away from courage, instead towards fear.

⁹² I have taken this after Dusinberre (2016). The writer is actually discussing the way in which the three other string quartet players are performing. He writes: 'From the first notes the Hungarians inhabited the drama.' At this point he is an outsider. He is auditioning for a position with the quartet.

Mendelssohn and Beethoven. The latter changed the course of music; the former, however gifted and accomplished, did not. (This is not to say that we would not be the poorer without Mendelssohn's music; we would.) Beethoven changed the course of music because he was personally and artistically courageous.

Is risk-taking an aspect of courage? The International Baccalaureate had previously supported this notion. Being a 'risk-taker' is one of the ten learner attributes, which the IB is keen for students (5-19) to develop. Risk-takers in the context of learning and teaching were described as follows:

They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs. (International Baccalaureate, 2009: 5)

In this earlier edition, the IB used the terms 'courage' and 'bravery' in explaining what it is to be a risk-taker. Now these do not feature. Risk-takers (within the same context) are described as follows:

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change. (International Baccalaureate, 2013: 1)

Although the description has now shifted - it is tempered, the use of the term 'risk-taker' (broadly speaking), was not taken lightly; it was carefully discussed.⁹³ But it was seen as an attribute worth promulgating. Part of the reason for such advocacy comes through in the research more recently carried out by Carroll and Dodds.

Carroll and Dodds (2016) approach risk-taking in tandem with creativity. They pinpoint the tension between the need, as perceived by higher education, for

⁹³ I say this from a professional and personal point of view. I participated (as a member of staff) in the initial discussion at the Chief Examiners' meeting and worked with subsequent drafts of the document.

risk-taking to enable creativity with the need for a culture of ‘minimum tolerance for errors’ (27) typical of the current A level drama and theatre classroom. Success, the evidence suggests, is taking place within a limited operational sphere. A key issue in constructing curriculum and assessment is that of ensuring reliability of assessment in partnership with the validity and integrity of the discipline. (This, I have found, can be particularly difficult in arts subjects.) The question is, should educators encourage risk-taking? (Risk-taking here is understood as a form of courage in learning and teaching.) Taking the short-term view as evidenced in the A level drama and theatre classroom, it would seem not. Taking the long-term view as evidenced by the higher education lecturers in the A level study and the earlier IB Learner Profile (2009), it would seem yes.

The lecturers saw the way in which the A level teaching was being approached as not providing students with experience in taking risks, learning from mistakes and exploring topics (Carroll and Dodds, 2016: 27). As a result creative and independent thinking is being circumscribed. This viewpoint is underlined by a moment in a young professional musician’s life. Here he is in rehearsal, which forms part of an audition. ‘... I would have to risk incorporating new ideas, however distracting. ‘Playing it safe’ didn’t seem to form any part of the Takács’ musical philosophy’ (Dusinberre, 2016: 36). This is an important moment of realisation. And it is to set him on a continued path of artistic debate (2).

Risk-taking can also provide a more widely defining moment. Rees finishes navigating his performance on the French horn. ‘I took a risk and lived ... From now on, when I go to the mirror in the small dark hours, I will be spared the accusing glare of an unfulfilled man’ (2008: 276). Through this expression of virtue - courageous action - (partly) comes self-realisation. The potentiality of the *daimon* (understood as ‘guiding action in the direction of self-fulfilment’, Waterman, 2008: 240) continues to flourish.

Courage exposes our vulnerability. Of course, each virtue, it can be argued, exposes vulnerability; vulnerability of, for instance, where a particular choice will take us - and how this choice may shape us. But there is a forceful peculiarity to courage. Courage (and understood more broadly than in

Aristotelian terms) acts as a ‘transformational coping skill’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008: 202). In music, where performers make themselves vulnerable - they ‘go *for it*’ [italics as in original] (Allan, 2013), it is crucial that students are supported in developing these coping aspects.

In both cases - the warrior’s, and it seems, the performer’s - there is pain surrounding the scenario and action, but a certain pleasure too. The correct goal is achieved - and in the right manner (NE 1105a14-17). The ‘courageous person ‘gets it right’ in all the many ways, and acts for the sake of the fine’ (Broadie, 2002: Commentary: 323 on 1115b11-24). Aristotle does concede though (1117b16-20) that the pleasure may be gained only in the outcome, (a noble death, for example), and not in the action itself (fighting). How ironic if today’s music performers forfeit pleasure in what they do because of an awareness of danger that is (rightly or wrongly) perceived as excessive (as in stage fright). Ironic: because the ancient Greeks were aware of the pleasure that music brings. By arguing that true (and appropriate) courage does take place beyond the war zone, music performance may find itself having to remind itself of the pleasure it can give.⁹⁴

In closing this section, risk-taking can be viewed as an aspect of courageous behaviour. Furthermore, it is required, or at least on a minimum account it is if creative or artistic endeavour is called for. And appropriate risk-taking needs support. Courage in music performance is also represented by that required over a sustained period (perhaps of a lifetime), in stylistic and intensity of performance, and in meeting more overtly fearful demands such as perceived in stage fright. There are too many instances of courage in music performance for us not to take these seriously: we should, with due diligence, take heed of the ‘commonplace’ and ‘save appearances’ as Aristotle is careful to do during his construction of philosophical argument. Perhaps it is enough to recognise the fact that performing requires courage however broadly defined. And, further, that one aspect of our relationship as listener (or composer) with a particular performer is, perhaps, to know of their ‘battles’, whether subsequently or at the time - or, in some cases, not at all. I will return to how the teaching and

⁹⁴ For example, Jane Manning, an expert on contemporary vocal music, writes that ‘the hedonistic side of performing is often overlooked!’ (1994: 3).

learning environment might help to provide this habituation and practice of courage when I discuss in the next chapter a particular learning framework. But for the moment it is enough to posit that courage is a requirement in music performance.

More recent conceptions of courage

It is at this point that a consideration of more recent work on courage may help reveal nuances and reconfigurations, and all within a broader sweep of contexts. These may have the potential to help musicians, and impact further on how we might construe courage in music performance.

To do this, I concentrate on the work of two psychologists in the field of ‘positive psychology’.⁹⁵ Peterson and Seligman (2004) touch on the Aristotelian view of virtue. In their search to claim virtue and character as ‘legitimate topics of psychological inquiry and informed societal discourse’ (3), they draw on the Aristotelian perspective. The focus of their investigation is on (a) ‘the relationship of traits to action’ and (b) ‘the melding of disparate traits into a singular self’ (88). Aristotle, as already noted, also developed thinking about these two aspects. Both Aristotle, and Peterson and Seligman focus on how these aspects contribute to, and form, a particular conception of happiness. Both sets of researchers are at pains to enable a eudaimonistic life. To put this as succinctly as possible: in Aristotle’s view, this is a life that can be measured objectively; in Peterson and Seligman’s view, this is a life that is measured by the subject (that is, the person who is living their particular life), hence subjectively. And further to this, Seligman (2011: 9) disagrees with Aristotle. Human action as construed only as aiming for happiness, (that is to say, displaying a monistic approach), is mistaken thinking. Thus, in the case of Peterson and Seligman, the *telos* is multifaceted or more strictly speaking, broader in conception.

Drawing upon Yearley (1990) whose work is concerned with comparing and contrasting virtues across cultures, religions and philosophies, Peterson and

⁹⁵ ‘Positive psychology’, a new approach to cognitive therapy, emerged in 1998. Seligman, along with Csikszentmihalyi, Peterson and Valliant, championed a more positive approach to psychology, hence the focus on happiness (Baylis, 2009: 85-87). It is also worth noting within the context of Beethovenian ‘disruption’ and the broader notion of ‘risk-taking’ that Baylis describes Seligman as brave and innovative (86).

Seligman are concerned with extending the range within which a virtuous action can take place. This might be done for example by investigating a virtue in the context of facing psychological or medical difficulties. By doing this, they hope to expand the meaning of a particular virtue (Peterson and Seligman, 2004: 88-89). A virtue is noted as being a positive characteristic. Briefly, Peterson and Seligman work with three layers (2004: 13-14). The first concerns virtues (core characteristics), the second character strengths, (these define the virtues through displaying the virtues), and third, (situational) themes. The latter are specifically located and are contextual. These themes are displayed through specific habits and are linked to the first two layers.

Within the second layer, of the six overarching character strengths, the second is 'courage'. For the purposes of my argument, what is particularly interesting is that each character strength can be achieved through a variety of ways (Peterson and Seligman, 2004: 51). Specifically, in the case of courage these are: bravery, including valour; persistence, including perseverance and industriousness; integrity, including authenticity and honesty; and, vitality, including zest, enthusiasm, vigour and energy (29). What is also noteworthy is that this approach issues from three types of courage as identified by Putman (1997): physical, moral, psychological. These point to the inclusivity that I was instinctively searching for when originally thinking about courage in music performance. Usefully too, courage is described by Peterson and Seligman (2004: 85) as a means whereby we protect what we think important. Already, then, the field of operation is wider and more encompassing.

Following on quite naturally from this, it is possible to note how this variety of ways can be demonstrated in the domain of music performance. Bravery can be demonstrated by performing in spite of fear (overcoming stage fright). Without thoughtful practice a musician will not fulfil their potential: persistency is required to practise. The outstanding pianist, Arthur Rubinstein (1980: 218-219; 258), is an example of someone who rested on his laurels only to realise that disciplined practise was called for. As he writes in his autobiography:

I knew that I had it in me to give a better account of the many works which I played in concerts with so much love and yet with so much tolerance for my own lack of respect and care. (258)

Elsewhere Rubinstein describes himself during this period as not developing his musicianship (260) and not being ‘very proud of myself’ (218). In the event, going through the process of having his playing recorded helped him. In recording studios, Rubinstein did ‘serious conscientious work’ (281). Integrity - the ‘genuine’ and the ‘coherent’ - is required (Peterson and Seligman, 2004: 205). The conductor, Gustavo Dudamel, is described in this way. He led the rehearsal with a ‘compassionate and enabling mode of leadership’ (Jourdan, 2013: 34).⁹⁶ Yet, within this approach, a disciplined approach towards music making is modelled. In short, there is integrity. Vitality, in the account of Peterson and Seligman’s, is ‘produced by virtue-congruent activity’ (209). The vitality previously claimed in Chapter 4 (after Casals) as a crucial part of a music performance framework requires this type of substantial action.

In terms of the possibility of self-assessment, Peterson and Seligman point out that some strengths are more easily reported on by the individual concerned than others. One’s own bravery and integrity for example are not easy to self-report on, possibly because these ‘are not the sorts of traits usually attributed to oneself’ (2004: 626). Nonetheless the pianist Rubinstein (1980) offers us an example of such self-reporting. Peterson and Seligman also point out that courage has an inner and an outer life (36), which is where integrity and perseverance can be considered courage. We get there through actions fuelled by those inner aspects: ‘cognitions, emotions, motivations, and decisions’ (36). Resistance to a situation that requires a courageous response can be ‘external or internal’ (199). I drew earlier in this chapter on the notion that the music performer may be fighting. It is as well for teachers to be aware that inner aspects may constitute an aspect of such a fight, and may not always be evident.

⁹⁶ This rehearsal took place in 2012, with the Simón Bolívar Orchestra working alongside Sistema Scotland in Raploch, Stirling (Jourdan, 2013).

From this research, it is possible to see that the contextual frontiers of courage are pushed back, be these physical, moral, psychological (after Putman, 1997). The concept of courage is extended, and while Peterson and Seligman are not arguing the case for the same *telos*, it is evident that the term ‘courage’ is aptly used in relation to music performance. This much is evident.

Courage redrawn

Courage requires identifying and facing fear whether internal or external.

In helping us redraw courage it is useful to consider that Hinchliffe (2004) argues that *technē* understood as art or skill in the work place need not be separated from moral action. In fact, skills need to be directed in their use for the right reason, be this moral, artistic or other. By extension, courage - as virtuous action in the work place - can take place beyond that of the fields of war. This includes, construed as work, music performance.

Of the aspects that emerged from the different accounts of music performance in the previous chapter, one in particular is of crucial importance - that of the act of producing a ‘vital creation’ (Corredor, 1956: 184). This aspect is crucial because it draws upon the musician as person; what I call their ‘vitality’, their character, is interwoven with the music. (This is wider than Peterson and Seligman’s account.) And when this act, which combines expertise of music and character, in the service of music is public, this brings with it particular demands. I posit that it is partly because of our (instinctive) understanding of courage in the music performer that music provides a forum for the display of modern-day courage, and in effect provides another lens to a music performance model.

Of the inner aspects already noted, one is crucial to the music performer. Goldie (2008: 192) argues that artistic activity (understood as taking place within a broad spectrum of the arts) involves ‘emotional sharing’ [in italics in the original]. He takes this a step further. Goldie posits that here is ‘an intimate awareness of the *permanent possibility* of emotional sharing’ (193; italics as in the original). As to the activity, it may also be uniquely placed among the sphere of human activities to do this. By engaging with the work of art, the circles of

engagement ripple out from the artist to the individual and to connected individuals across time. Goldie argues that the type of emotional sharing which stems from artistic interaction is valuable for a number of reasons. Not only is it of intrinsic value; it offers opportunity to interact with others and to learn about ourselves (193-194). If Goldie is correct, it is important that all people are given the opportunity to develop their sensitivity to artistic work, because this artistic interaction (uniquely) affords this particular collective experience. Part of the potential of human endeavour is wrapped up in this. If so, on Aristotle's understanding that emotion is cognitively rich, here is a further reason for educational institutions to include an education in the arts as part of a balanced (and connected) curriculum.

It may be that the effort of courage as made by the performing musician taps into an (instinctive) understanding of this emotional sharing, some instances of which may become captured 'forever' in the collective consciousness. Perhaps one reason why people are drawn to the music performer is the (instinctive) realisation that courage is required for this act. And courage is appreciated. In fact, it is stronger than this. 'That people consider courage the foremost reason for admiring others emerged from the data of my three-generation family study' (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008: 277, Note 200). Take for example the following instance.

In a perceptively and sensitively written article, Leith (2016: 15) explores Patti Smith's performance of Bob Dylan's *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall* for the occasion of the award of the Nobel prize for literature to Bob Dylan. Leith describes it as 'one of the live performances of this or any decade'. Why is this so? We cannot ignore that it is partly because of the joint entwining of the song ('stalled in time' and 'obdurately itself') and the occasion, but mostly this is made so because of the performance given by Patti Smith. When the performance stuttered to a stop (in Leith's words, it had 'collapsed'), the vulnerability of the performer is revealed. The apology, ("I apologise. Sorry. I am so nervous.") serves to underline the vulnerability. This was a peculiarly dramatic human moment. Leith describes the mistake, forgetting lyrics, as 'the crack that lets the light get in', a 'magical' moment. (Here, it must be noted, we are not

talking about an unprepared or lazy performer. Here is a professional performer who carries ‘prestige’.)

Leith, who did not attend the ceremony, but watched this performance on video, is fully cognisant of his emotional reaction: ‘tears poured down my cheeks’. His reaction recognises how deep Patti Smith reaches into her resources: ‘There was half a century of history and feeling behind her performance’. The performance demanded courage. And it was heroic.

We can, of course, argue that Patti Smith was performing a social duty - that of a Nobel prize ceremony. And that this was but one moment of courage. And we may not be aware of other instances in her life. A moment of courage and in the spotlight, can define us in the public eye. But, is one courageous moment enough? Can we really expect ‘cross-situational consistency’ (Goldie, 2008: 183)? Perhaps it is enough to say that the individual displays a ‘receptivity’⁹⁷ to opportunities requiring courage. And they face the fear.

A belief that emotional sharing (via art) is an integral aspect of human living life also makes the vulnerability of a music performer’s courage something to be valued requiring as it does, human empathy. The performer demonstrates that it is possible to move beyond the ego to the heroic or fine. For, in the end, this is a collaborative venture.

... it is in relation to one another that we do what is just, courageous, and whatever else accords with the virtues, by observing closely what is fitting for each person in contracts, necessary services, and all manner of actions, as well as in matters involving all the passions; and all these concerns appear to be characteristically human. (*NE* 1178a 11-15)

Conclusion

If courage is to remain the province of a particular social strata (with specific opportunities), courage belongs to an exclusive club. It is beyond, and remains beyond, the reach of many individuals. This simply does not square with countless examples of courage through the centuries by men and women from

⁹⁷ Goldie uses this term in relation to artistic work (2008: 184).

all walks of life; some stories known, some unknown. Courage is inclusive: all have the potential to be courageous. It would be nice to think that Aristotle, who of all people was keen to further our understanding and knowledge, would not have wanted exclusivity to remain as the state of affairs. There is no evidence, given his way of delving into current states of the world around him with the goal of further understanding, that Aristotle would condone such a state of 'stasis'. Nonetheless, his work on courage, taking place in a particular context, has given us much to think on - and *is* his argument.

But, by building on Aristotle's exploration of courage, I have demonstrated that there is evidence that courage is a virtue which is required, and can legitimately be recognised as courage during a music performer's life. This is the case, be this as part of the preparation and study surrounding or encompassing a performance, or the music performance itself. Furthermore, the music performance model of personalism draws attention to the important point that the human being is a driving force behind music making and is, therefore, of significance. Hence, it is not in a music student's interest for their vitality to be dampened through an inappropriate stance towards the notion of fear. Following Aristotle's belief that courage must be practised, we need, somehow, to help students practise the courage required in music performance - and for it to be consistent with their eudaimonistic goal. How best, then, can a teacher nurture courage and other virtuous dispositions in learning and teaching for the world of music performance? I turn in the next chapter to a virtue, which is integrative in nature - *phronēsis* or practical wisdom, in order to sketch a possible framework.

Chapter 6

Disturbance and practical wisdom

In this chapter I identify disturbance or ‘breakage’ in learning as challenging, both for the teacher and the student. By drawing upon aspects of Kieran Egan’s learning theory, I consider how a professional who embodies Aristotelian practical wisdom might work to support a music student’s development. Moments of disturbance, whilst not tidy, occur - and cause disruption. In particular, I present and interpret some of the key aspects of practical wisdom in response to a case study in which a professional pianist looks back at his time as a student with one of his teachers. While cognisant that perhaps not all teachers may reach the point of maturation that is practical wisdom, I argue that this constellation virtue contributes significantly to what it means to be a teacher. Furthermore, embodying practical wisdom is important if we are to consider a music teacher as acting as a useful role model for students. For teaching provides in itself a serious context, as evidenced by disturbance in learning and, as demonstrated in the two previous chapters, by consideration of courage and music performance as personalism, and thus it behoves the teacher developing into a professional person of practical wisdom.

I begin by briefly considering the importance of teacher as role model and then move on to consider learning disturbance.

Professional context and learning disturbance

Aristotle recognises the importance of role models in our lives, particularly drawing attention to this kind of influence when he speaks about friends emulating signature strengths: ‘for they take an imprint from one another of the qualities they find pleasing’ (*NE* 1172a13-14). And in *Politics* he is aware of familial influence, arguing that education needs to be provided beyond the home. Today too the importance of role models is often lauded. Gardner (2008: 141) argues, specifically, that because they work with young students, teachers are ‘crucial models’. Students note for example, teachers’ behaviour, attitudes

towards their profession, mode of interaction with others, and, this is key, their reactions to students' work.

According to Elliott (1991: 49-50), the values we give to improving professional practice are manifest in both the outcomes, ('e.g. "justice" for legal practice, ... "education" for teaching'), and the 'intrinsic qualities of the practices themselves'. Elliott continues by giving examples of 'intrinsic qualities' that impact on the student 'access to the curriculum' and hence 'quality of learning'. These include teacher openness to student 'questions, ideas, and ways of thinking', 'respect for evidence', and the development of 'independent thinking'. This interaction not only provides modelling behaviour (following Gardner) but the very act of teaching 'mediates students' access to the curriculum and the quality of this mediating process is not insignificant for the quality of learning'.

The importance of the role model, the act of reflection and the openness to the two-way nature of a professional-client relationship in the developing experience of a professional's life are encapsulated by O'Hara (a clinician and former ballet dancer) when she writes:

I have been fortunate in my life to have met so many good role models and mentors who have shown me the way through their counsel and example, and given me such wonderful opportunities to learn. It is a never-ending process of education and reflection and personal development ... They [the patients] have been the source of my real development as a clinician. It is not something taught from textbooks, or in the classroom. (2016: 220)

Here the emphasis is on the development of expertise via the interpersonal aspect of the role (whether professional to professional or professional to client). Teachers and their students also work in a context that has at its centre interpersonal dialogue. Fundamentally, teachers and students communicate with one another so that students continue to develop their learning.

But during learning, the student expends energy in dealing with concepts. The students refashion this learning material, including their own positioning within it. This is particularly close to the surface in music learning. Performing music for example is not always a matter of 'wrong or right'. Smooth learning, where there is the gradual building up of knowledge, understanding and skills, does occur. But acquiring experience also involves what I call 'disturbance' - the kind where there is ambiguity, anomaly or even 'breakage'.

Here I share a simple example of what might be termed 'disturbance'. When we were very young, one of my sisters entered a local music competition and was told that the tempo in which she chose to perform the minuet was too slow. Partly from misplaced loyalty, I remember sharing this with my piano teacher and being cross. To me minuets were stately. Full stop! My teacher shrugged her shoulders to the effect that minuets might not always be so, and that was the end of the 'conversation'. But here was a real opportunity to help me move to a place where I could begin to look at the minuet across time and context, including its relationships with, for example the trio and scherzo. It also, bizarrely, left me with an antipathy towards the minuet.⁹⁸

It can be seen from this example that a disturbance of this type presents a circumstance - student confusion as they learn whether to reframe or not. Disturbance presents elements of discomfort (such as confusion). That said, it is also an opportunity to re-evaluate and reconfigure one's understanding. But it seems to require careful management by the teacher, and some of the management may require characteristics of what might sometimes be referred to as practical wisdom. This requirement for careful handling of the situation seems to be borne out by the following. According to Gardner (2008: 142) a key moment occurs when the group and its teacher navigate a moment of 'discomfort'.⁹⁹ This I interpret as taking place within the teacher-student

⁹⁸ I hasten to add, that I concede that there are some attractive minuet and trios in which the trio section provides a somewhat grittier foil to its minuet, Haydn's *Piano Sonata Number 11 in Bb Hob. XVI/2* being a case in point!

⁹⁹ This point by Gardner is made in reference to students in law school. The passage reads as follows: 'It's been said that students in law school form an enduring concept of an instructor by the way he or she deals with the first moments of genuine discomfort in the classroom' (2008: 142). I think it need not stretch the point to say that this is true across a range of disciplines and learning situations.

dynamic in relation to student work. Careful handling of the situation is required therefore as students have invested themselves (or not) in their work.

There are different accounts of learning of course.¹⁰⁰ Where I think Egan's account is particularly helpful is in regard to the richness of disturbance in learning. His staged theory (1986)¹⁰¹ is a practical tool in that it breaks apart and reconfigures pivotal learning moments, what I call 'disturbance'. Implicit in this theory is that the learner makes progress, sometimes with discomfort, but without being overwhelmed. Given the presence of pressure in general - the singer Alfie Boe (Boe and Godfrey, 2012: 91) notes that studying music as an undergraduate was 'tough work' and that many students at his college 'fell apart because of the amount of pressure' - I think this has to be an essential consideration.

It should be noted that the influences for Egan's theory of individual development and interaction with the curriculum lie within the liberal arts: specifically 'anthropology, poetics, and philosophy of history' (1986: 167). His aim, clearly, is not therefore that of providing education for utilitarian reasons. The theory is based on that of a natural occurring intellectual development, thus echoing Aristotle's identification of different stages of development (as discussed in Chapter 3). Egan (1986) prefers to refer to his theory as a theory of education, arguing that 'motivation, learning, and development, from an educational point of view, are not really distinct phenomena' (1986: 168). These elements, then, are viewed as integrative or overlapping phenomena.

A key characteristic of Egan's theory of developmental progression is that each stage is defined by the occurrence of 'an important educational transition' (1986: 80). Here the 'disturbance' I noted is prominent. A 'hiatus' of sorts is reached. Such moments are inevitable but as Sherman argues (based on Aristotle's work), the act of reassessment - and subsequent accommodation - forms part of gaining (meaningful) experience (1989: 193). Egan's theory helps to anchor thinking about difficult moments of passage and how to best support

¹⁰⁰ These include for example: Piaget (psychological), Kohlberg (moral development) and Swanwick and Tillman (music development).

¹⁰¹ Egan's work (1986) *Individual development and the curriculum* (Hutchinson) was originally published in 1979 (Oxford University Press) under the title *Educational development*.

the student in such moments. Egan posits four intellectual developmental stages: the mythic, romantic, philosophic, and ironic.¹⁰² Of these, I will focus on the latter stages as these reflect the learning of teenagers and young adults. Nonetheless it is worth bearing in mind that all four stages do have patterns and elements in common.¹⁰³

Egan understands a theory as ‘a thing to think with - an intellectual tool made from distinctions that conform with the phenomena it is about’ (1986: 6). Inevitably there will be an element of being too neat and self-contained, but a theory can offer a framework within which to work and make sensible connections between the phenomena. He writes that the value of a theory has as its yardstick how well it matches with and derives meaning from, the relevant phenomena, as well as the degree to which it ‘guides practice, observation, and research’ so that ‘its categories and distinctions’ align yet ‘more closely with the phenomena’ (6). While this description has a deliberate circularity about it, it does pick out characteristics that are useful to bring to the fore. Particularly for the purposes of this discussion, how well a theory (assuming its robustness) guides practice is key. I explore this theory, then, both as a tool and as providing a context within which to approach inevitable disturbance in learning.

At this point I sketch the salient features of each of the stages, particularly the third and fourth of these. Moving from the ‘mythic’ stage in which the younger child captures concepts through appreciating their polarisation (for example, hot and cold), a child enters the ‘romantic’ stage. During this second stage, a young person develops an understanding of abstract concepts. Thus somewhere between 7 to 14/15 years of age the ability to work and develop general schemes is a nascent feature.

Later the student begins to appreciate connectivity (at the age of approximately 14/15 to 19/20) and enters the ‘philosophic’ stage. This appreciation of connectivity is twofold. Firstly, there is that of interconnections within one or more disciplines, for example history comes into view as a ‘single complex story’

¹⁰² Later (1997) Egan was to go on and identify a very early stage, the ‘somatic’.

¹⁰³ Egan (1979) recognises the impact of others’ work on his argument, notably Plato (*Republic* 1945) and Frye (1957). In Plato’s *Republic* are the analogous developmental stages: *eikasia*, *pistis*, *dianonia*, *noesis*.

and is no longer ‘a set of stories’ (1986: 50). In this sense, the ‘key concepts’, which feature in individual Cambridge International AS and A Level syllabuses and the interconnections required in the Theory of Knowledge aspect of the IB Diploma Programme, are supportive of this. In the former the connections tend to be within the one discipline and in the latter, within and across disciplines. Secondly, the student too is connected to the material. The Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) component of the Diploma Programme may help to firmly establish this particular connection in a student’s mind. Students ‘do’; students ‘reflect’. The student is manifestly part of the connection of the discipline.

It is also important to note that the mythic (first stage) and philosophic (third stage) converge in that each individual finds meaning in the ‘general or paradigmatic’ (Egan, 1986: 160). In brief, individuals within the first and third stages rely on deductive reasoning. There is a danger in that the ‘philosophic’ student may, according to Egan, apply the general to the particular without thinking about detail. But Egan describes this as a coping mechanism. Essentially, this is about manageability - bringing order to complexity (53). Here it is worth being aware that Aristotle notes that a person of practical wisdom, that is someone of greater experience, brings both the general and the particular to the fore. This I will consider later in this chapter.

To grapple with detail inevitably exposes anomaly. Egan identifies anomaly as offering student learning increasing breadth and depth of understanding. The student might consider the following guiding question when looking at an issue for example. And the question could serve to underpin the design of teaching and learning units at the philosophic stage. From a big picture point of view, how is this subject content organised? (1986: 66). More specifically, the music teacher could pose the following question for example. How do clear contrasts in music structure help me as a performer? The student might move from the guiding question which serves to structure the learning, in this case, about clear musical contrasts, to a question that focuses on music in which structure is more nebulous (thus capturing potential identification of anomaly). In minimalism for example the musical contrasts can be much more subtle, ever shifting but almost intangibly so. Of course, this is true to a point as when compared with

the obvious blocks of contrasts (ABACA or rondo form), for example in Beethoven's *Für Elise*.

In addition to the student developing breadth and depth in learning through the consideration of the anomalous, Egan contends that the 'contentious' should also form a 'central focus' (1986: 78). In a nutshell, Egan argues that were we not to allow for the contentious in education then in effect we pretend that a neutral stance towards all things is possible. In addition, I argue that to some extent the contentious is also found in the anomalous. An anomaly throws nuanced shading or even doubt on the 'status quo'. A guiding question following on from the previous ones can give a flavour of the contentious. Indeed, can structure in music be argued to exist? Or the following could act as a stepping-stone to this particular question. Consider for example aleatoric (chance) music. Can we say that it is structured? And, what if we were to throw away structure? Would music still exist? The cognitive work will be that of 'thinking about' and 'thinking doing' (be it listening, composing or performing). But the real point is that the student is being encouraged to think both broadly and deeply, for both the anomalous and contentious require further readjustment in relation to the understanding of the conceptual scheme.

This, of course, means that the (philosophic) student will need some support. And Egan, unsurprisingly, identifies teacher support as a teaching principle that emerges from the process of challenging the general scheme of understanding or access to knowledge (1986: 59). Logically therefore, teachers themselves need to have moved beyond the philosophic stage in order to be skilful at providing the required level and type of support needed. They need to be comfortable with abstractions, metaphysical terms, ideology and general theories, all of which are typical of the philosophic stage (129). In guiding students of the philosophic stage, teachers need to take particular care in modelling a balance in their argumentative views (thus echoing Aristotle and his appreciation of the mean). The views should not be extremist. For example an extreme view is particularly on display when a polarised view of the contentious is argued or enacted. The playing out of extremist views of perfection is shown to detrimental effect in *Whiplash*. The student is literally, hounded, and therefore unable to apply any critical or reflective thinking: all he is doing is reacting to

extreme pressure. (I am not suggesting that he is a passive agent, but the dominance of the teacher's strategic goal of aiming to own, and claim success, trumps all.) In effect, the student's commitment is immature. This latter point is significant. While providing support, teachers should be cognisant that 'The immature will of necessity make immature commitments' (Egan, 1986: 79). The latter carries echoes of Aristotle, who argues (in *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*) that experience is important.¹⁰⁴ Teachers need to be aware of immature commitment and not exploit, as in the case of *Whiplash*, a student's ability and affinity with music.

At the same time however, students need to try out commitments and find their place. The scrutiny of the general context typical of the philosophic is 'toward the self' not 'from' (1986: 52; italics as in the original). The Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) programme as part of the IB Diploma Programme offers a nice counterbalance to this, given its outward looking nature (and with space included for reflection). Egan considers this narcissistic period necessary. And it follows therefore that teaching requires sensitivity to this particular need in order to know about the world (64) and to be comfortable in it. An illustration of the need for this understanding of the narcissistic is the ability to work towards the feeling of 'finding' one's 'tribe'. The violinist Yehudi Menuhin was described in a television programme as '... always using music as, not a retreat, but simply the natural place where he lived ... it's like a bird - you don't expect a bird not to fly, birds fly every day, and musicians make music every day; and that's what he wanted to do more than anything else in the world'.¹⁰⁵ I am not suggesting that Menuhin was narcissistic, only that an individual needs to go through this quasi-narcissistic period to find, if nothing else, their natural environment.

To break away from the philosophic stage, the student needs to gradually come to the realisation that the general cannot capture the particular and, furthermore, that the particular brings 'richness and complexity' (Egan, 1986: 82). As at the romantic stage, in this new and final (fourth) stage, meaning is found in the particular, and inductive reasoning is employed. The construction

¹⁰⁴ In *Politics* experience is of an applied nature; that is to say, the experience of the citizens is used to educate the young (1337a21-7).

¹⁰⁵ BBC Four (2014) *Yehudi Menuhin at the BBC*, Humphrey Burton, interviewer Petroc Trelawny, 54 minutes into the programme (Trelawny, 2014).

of meaning in these ways brings potential crisis: ‘intellectual security’ (83) needs to be rebuilt. Both the general and the particular, the anomalous (and contentious), now need to be accommodated. The capacity for generalising, explored and developed in the previous stage, is now controlled (129). It is controlled in the sense that it is now ‘flexible and responsive to particulars’ (134). I will return to the matter of flexibility and responsiveness later in this chapter. Egan refers to this mature stage as ‘ironic’ and describes it as a ‘cooperative venture’ (88) between teacher and student. Egan does not indicate when this working partnership might loosen its bonds, but in essence, the student is now able to relinquish self and accept in full the other.

With these observations in mind, it is clear that each stage in Egan’s theory has its own learning characteristics and identity, and that care needs to be taken before moving on to the next. The particular stage provides the context within which the content - the context of the knowledge (understood broadly as also encapsulating understanding and skills) is arranged appropriately for that student at that stage (Egan, 1986: 91). Progress from one stage to another can be ragged (94) and there can be a partial overlay of the stages (92). In addition, once we have moved on, it would be easy to discount the importance of each stage. But Egan argues that it is important that ‘a properly educated adult should still be able to see the world with the eyes of a child’ (92). The adult can remember, share with the student, and guide.

With these developmental stages along with the opportunities they afford providing the context, I turn now to Egan’s consideration of (intellectual) access to material for learning. Access can be misjudged. Broadly speaking Egan (1986) posits that an individual’s interaction with contextual knowledge can lie in one of three domains. I summarise this for ease of reference.

The three domains

Domain	1. Entertaining	2. Aliment	3. Inert
Stage-related	Appropriately organised for the previous stage	New learning required for further development in the current stage	Belongs to the next stage
Accessibility	Accessible, but does not get the learner any further	Makes the learner readjust understanding	Inaccessible to the learner

In relation to the first of the three domains, Egan is at pains to explain that he does not use the term ‘entertaining’ pejoratively. What Egan is concerned with is that the learning ‘in addition to giving pleasure also promotes educational development’ (1986: 106). I think the ‘entertaining’ is, possibly, also a way of revisiting and consolidating the childlike approach to viewing the world mentioned earlier. The second domain, ‘aliment’, is a term used by Piaget.¹⁰⁶ (I can approach this in a literal sense, as ‘food for thought’.) Egan (107) notes that alimential learning requires ‘intellectual energy’, the overcoming of resistance and ‘continual intellectual courage’. This learning is both nourishing and requires nourishment. This is the optimum domain for a learner. Egan takes the third term, ‘inert’, from Whitehead’s work (1967). Inaccessibility can be demoralising and demotivating. The student in Chapter 1 who was at a loss as to how to answer the listening paper is an example of this. That said I consider that sometimes the inaccessible can carry with it a mystique - and therefore pique the interest. This is illustrated by a typical childhood moment, when adults spell a conversation so you the child did not understand what was being discussed! Moments like this aside, it follows that teachers need to ensure students’ appropriate educational development by being aware of the implications of this third domain. In short, the role of the teacher in relation to access of material (contextual knowledge) demands awareness of the stage of development and the capacity to organise knowledge within the stage with these three domains in view. Otherwise, access to development can be compromised.

¹⁰⁶ Egan does not state which of Piaget’s texts he takes this term from. This could be from: Piaget (1931) or Piaget (1965).

Egan's theory confirms, unsurprisingly, that students need to be helped. Three key points emerge. Firstly, there is the work that needs doing in order to meet the demands of the particular stage. Secondly, there is the help that is needed so as to develop the possibilities for learning within and across stages, notably the stage above. Thirdly, there is the challenge of providing (domain) aliment to ensure on-going development (Egan, 1986: 108). The significance of Egan's theory for the purpose of my argument is that it primarily throws the spotlight on problematic moments in a student's evolving learning. The theory, clearly, posits an approach of teacher and student working together, both with responsibilities. To look back to the candidate sitting the listening paper (cited in my opening chapter): who in fact was taking responsibility? Both? One? Neither? That said, the role of teaching, and the responsibility it carries, remains key. To be able to fulfil this role, the teacher needs to be 'well advanced in the ironic stage' (1986: 108). Implicit in this statement is the requirement of a certain level of maturity. This brings us to a consideration of teacher as a significant professional individual who is practically wise - intellectually and morally. A teacher needs guidance and support in this, much as O'Hara (2016) did as clinician. I posit that practical wisdom is supportive in learning to deal with (and possibly pre-empt) disturbances and forms an integral part of developing professional practice.

Kinship of Aristotelian virtues and practical wisdom: a necessary bond

In this section, there are three opening points to make. The first is that in Aristotle's account, the presence of practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) within an individual assumes that the other virtues are present. He states: 'For all the virtues will be present when the one virtue, prudence, is present' (*NE* 1145a2-3). While this 'unity' or otherwise (including plurality) of virtues is argued by others and is not something that I actively pursue here, my working approach to this is as follows. Building on Chapter 2 in which I discussed virtue as a 'complex of capacities' (Sherman, 1989: 166) and to a lesser extent, Chapter 5, I do not take the view that the ability to become a person of practical wisdom is compromised by a lack of opportunity, resources or natural learning (ability).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Annas (2011: 115-116) uses the terms 'circumstantial' and 'non-circumstantial'. In the first, the circumstances are set out: only the 'lucky' will have the opportunity to develop characteristics of practical wisdom. In the second, a life lived in (any) circumstance(s) affords the opportunity to develop such characteristics.

Each person has within their scope, a degree of influence.¹⁰⁸ And within this sphere of influence, particular virtue(s) will come to the fore. I think of these virtues as, in effect, hallmarks. They emanate from that person, *and* they distinguish that person. They contribute to what we can identify as the individuality of a particular person. Sherman (140) refers to the ‘prominence’ of certain virtues as ‘mediating’ a person’s virtuous disposition ‘in a special way’. This reflects what I have noted in my (professional) life. When I think of a particular colleague, certain virtuous characteristics or strengths will paint for me their professional identity. This also reflects the commonsensical approach that Aristotle takes in closing Book 1 of *Nicomachean Ethics*, although of course this call on the commonsense view is presented, partly as an argumentative gambit. Nonetheless, this matter of strengths is a matter of degree and includes judgement. Certain situations will demand certain virtues, and ‘cherry-picking’ which virtues to apply would miss the point of learning to live well (eudaimonistically). There is a point at which a person would not be recognised as a *phronimos* - a person of practical wisdom. (“He or she was found wanting.”) It is to this extent that I concur with Sherman’s reasoning. In any case, the unity of virtues and their display rather pushes the point that there exists at any one time a definitive list of virtues. As noted in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, this seems very unlikely. Nonetheless, we have to be cognisant that Aristotle was firm on this point of the unity of virtues. His stance serves to reinforce the difficulty level of practical wisdom and as a consequence, the admiration in which it is held.

My second opening point is this. It is clear from Egan’s account of learning that dealing with disturbance requires decisions to be made. The centrality of both characterful and intellectual aspects in decision-making is expressed in *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book 6, Chapter 2). Notwithstanding whether it ‘apprehends truly the end’ or what ‘conduces to the end’ (Brown, 2009: 240¹⁰⁹), this centrality is perhaps why practical wisdom is considered such a valued virtue. While intellectual in focus, this particular wisdom requires both (moral and intellect) and distils both, emerging in the shape of the practically wise

¹⁰⁸ Clearly, external matters come into play, for example the length of life lived. Aristotle is clear that external factors (such as luck) play a part in life. This has been already noted in previous chapters.

¹⁰⁹ Here Brown (2009) is discussing *NE* Book 6, Chapter 9.

individual. Dispositions and particularities coalesce. The human being lives in a context of practical thinking, always trying to seek out ‘the clarity that accords with the subject matter’ (NE 1094b12-13). Such clarity requires good deliberation, an aspect I will return to.

My third opening point is to draw attention once again to the importance of the intellect, including its links with the moral. Aristotle very early on in *Nicomachean Ethics* notes the presence of two types of virtue: intellectual and moral (NE 1103a5). Pakaluk (2005: 216) notes that in Aristotle’s lifetime a ‘non-practical’ but nonetheless ‘substantive’ use of reason was a relatively recent discovery. Whilst military and political prowess might have once seemed a reasonable goal, the discovery, some hundred years before Aristotle was born, of a more intellectual life - mathematical, philosophic, scientific - had altered the focus. In the light of this, it seemed to Aristotle that priorities had shifted. Intellectual life brought with it a more measured attitude towards ‘excess and deficiency’.¹¹⁰ What once might have seemed ‘reasonable dedication’ towards the military and political might no longer seem to be the case. Pakaluk writes: ‘To Aristotle it would seem vitally compelling that a young person should minimize the time spent on other things, in order to maximize time spent in speculative and contemplative thought’ (216). In this way, the young person’s life is more likely to be opened out to see beyond the prowess of the military and political. In effect, there are other ways of truth making. Seen like this, the effort expended on moral virtue is, in no small way, to service intellectual virtue. The groundwork on character has to take place (via training and habit) so that intellectual life (speculative and contemplative) can begin to flourish (via teaching and learning). Life of the intellect needs stable and particular attitudes and in Aristotle’s account, these are derived from moral virtue.

With these three broad points in mind, I move on to sketch briefly the context in terms of particular virtues and their links with practical wisdom.

¹¹⁰ We see this in Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean. Although the discussion is on the mean as played out in moral virtue, its relevance to the life of the intellect cannot be ignored. To think about George Eliot’s character Casaubon in *Middlemarch* is to know of a life of the intellect which is out of kilter: it clearly lacks balance (Eliot, 1985).

Once Aristotle has posed in *Nicomachean Ethics* the question as to the usefulness of practical reason, he is well placed to continue to press the case for its importance. He opens this particular argument by simply stating that *phronēsis* (practical wisdom) and *sophia* (intellectual wisdom) are virtues. Intellectual wisdom, through its possession, produces happiness; practical wisdom, acting in concord with moral virtue, safeguards the process. This concordance is expressed as follows: ‘For virtue makes the target correct, prudence [practical wisdom] the things conducive to that target’ (NE 1144a7-8). The work of practical wisdom (*phronēsis*) is the seeking of ‘truth’ and reached therefore through reasoning. *Phronēsis* shares this task with the other ‘intellectual parts [of the soul]’ (1139b11): that is to say, *epistēmē*, *nous*, *sophia* and *technē* (1139b 16-17). Aristotle discusses these, the most important virtues of the intellect, in Book 6 of *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Of the first of these virtues of the intellect, *epistēmē* is concerned with what cannot be otherwise. *Epistēmē* can be translated from the ancient Greek as ‘knowledge’. (It can be used in both the singular and in the plural.) In *Nicomachean Ethics*, the term *epistēmē* is used in two ways. The first is that of a body of knowledge (including ‘crafts’), which is ‘systematically organised, rationally justifiable and teachable’ (Irwin, 1985: 424). Medicine is one such example. The second way is that of ‘scientific’ knowledge, for example, mathematics. In contrast, what *epistēmē* is not is ‘modern natural science, the modern scientific method’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 314).

The range of translations into English used in different editions of *Nicomachean Ethics* captures either one or both spirits of the word. Broadie and Rowe translate *epistēmē* variously as ‘knowledge, scientific knowledge, systematic knowledge’ (2002: 454). Pakaluk (2005: 209) refers to the first of these whereas Brown (2009: 270) uses both the first and second of these. In addition to using the second term, ‘scientific knowledge’, Bartlett and Collins translate *epistēmē* as ‘science’ (2011: 317). This notwithstanding, the key point is that when Aristotle discusses the virtues of the intellect, ‘scientific knowledge’ is a particular knowledge acquired by particular means. The heading that Ross (in Aristotle, 2009: 104) provides for Book 6, Chapter 3 puts it like this: ‘Scientific knowledge - demonstrative knowledge of the necessary and eternal’. In other

words, and in contrast to practical wisdom, *epistēmē* deals with that which ‘does not admit of being otherwise’ (NE 1139b21): the knowledge is permanent, ‘eternal’ (1139b24) and can be taught and learnt (1139b25-26). Truth of the ‘scientific’ sort is based on principles (1139b34) and can be demonstrated (1139b33).

If something is to be regarded as truth, ‘truth’ requires proof. To begin to work towards identifying truth in scientific knowledge (*epistēmē*) a ‘scientist’ requires *nous*, the second of the virtues of the intellect. *Nous* is variously translated as ‘intellect’ or ‘intellectual grasp’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 318) and ‘intelligence’, Broadie, and Rowe (in Aristotle, 2002: 454). Brown refers to *nous* as sometimes ‘reason’ but mostly ‘intuitive reason’ (2009: 269), with Pakaluk preferring to use ‘sound intuition’ (2005: 222). Irwin (1985: 429) uses ‘understanding’ or ‘sense’ (as in commonsense). But what is at the heart of *nous* is the following: in order to identify any (scientific) principles, some kind of intuitive reasoning is required. These intuitions are ‘unproven assumptions’ (Brown, 2009: xv-xvi), which Rowe (2002) refers to as ‘starting points’ (1140b31) or ‘objects of intelligence’ (1141a8). Aristotle further describes intuitive reasoning as working with ‘the defining boundaries’ (NE 1142a26 [translation by Bartlett and Collins]) or what Ross (in Aristotle, 2009) translates to be ‘of the limiting premises’ (1142a26). The reasoning is, therefore, delimited or what we can call, focused. To some limited extent the person of practical wisdom can be said to draw upon ‘objects of intelligence’, (that is to say, the student’s interaction with, or provocation of, the disturbance) with defining boundaries (societal or alimantal for example). Framing the issue like this is partly helpful. Nonetheless as Aristotle makes plain, *nous* and practical wisdom are not the same.

Both *epistēmē* and *nous* form part of truth of a broader and deeper kind - *sophia*, the third of the virtues of the intellect. Broadie, and Rowe (in Aristotle, 2002: 455) translate the term *sophia* as ‘intellectual accomplishment’. In Aristotelian terms, to be intellectually accomplished is not to be operating at the height of cultural or educational knowledge (Broadie, 2002: 53). Instead, Aristotle claims the space for *sophia* as one of ‘theoretical’ and ‘intellectual accomplishment’ (53). Such a person would, according to Aristotle, know ‘what

proceeds *from* the principles’ and find out ‘the truth *about* the principles’ (*NE* 1141a18-19; [italics as presented in the translation by Bartlett and Collins]). This type of accomplishment when conjoined is ‘complete’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 123, Note 34). Continuing thus, it is easy to see why *sophia* is more commonly translated into English as ‘wisdom’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 318; Brown, 2009: 270; Pakaluk, 2005: 222). ‘Wisdom’ conveys the more encompassing aspect of this intellectual virtue. Nonetheless, Aristotle restricts this to wisdom that is ‘philosophic’ (Brown 2009: 270). Bartlett and Collins state its importance as follows: ‘That which the “philosopher”, the “lover” of “wisdom”, most seeks’ (2011: 316). *Sophia* is, then, intellectual wisdom, and Aristotle regards *sophia* as the virtue which is the intellectual accomplishment to be the most coveted or sought after (*NE* Book 6, Chapter 7). Perhaps the ‘ironic’ stage (Egan, 1986) at its upper reaches of achievement fulfils this.

Besides *epistēmē*, *nous*, *sophia*, another form of intellectual reasoning reveals itself through the intellectual virtue of *technē* (Book 6, Chapter 4), the fourth of the virtues of the intellect. *Technē* is ‘craftsmanship’ (Pakaluk, 2005: 221), ‘craft’ (Irwin, 1985: 392) or ‘art’ (Brown, 2009: 269; Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 319); that is to say, ‘expertise, craft’ (Bartlett and Collins: 269) or ‘technical expertise’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 238; Broadie, and Rowe in Aristotle, 2002: 455). *Technē* is also translated as a ‘skill’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 319; Broadie, and Rowe in Aristotle, 2002: 455). Irwin describes it as ‘a rational discipline concerned with production’ (1985: 392). Broadie (2002: 366) notes that in Book 6, Aristotle, by concentrating on the fashioning or manipulation of material, is referring to ‘technical expertise’ narrowly. Ordinarily, the term would also encompass particular theoretical skills. It is clear then that *technē* is involved with ‘making’ (*poiēsis*)¹¹¹ (*NE* 1140a1) or ‘production’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 119, Note 23). The outline that Ross provides for Book 6, Chapter 4 puts it like this: ‘Art - knowledge of how to make things’ (in Aristotle, 2009: xl). These ‘made’ things or ‘productions’ have their origin outside of themselves (*NE* Book 6, Chapter 4): they are worked on. Unlike scientific knowledge, intuitive reasoning and intellectual wisdom, *technē* interacts with what can be ‘otherwise’ (*NE* 1140a1). The ‘making ... is accompanied by true reason’ (1140a21-22). This can be expressed as follows: ‘What is the best I can do *to*

¹¹¹ *Poiēsis* is also ‘poetry’ and ‘poem’ (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 119, Note 23).

achieve special end T? [italics as in original] (Broadie, 2002: 368). Similarly, teachers help students make learning in the best possible manner. With this sketch of *technē* in mind, it is noteworthy that in discussing teacher identity Coldron and Smith (1999: 715-716) identify ‘craft’ as one of the four social traditions that ‘provide influential models for responding to issues and questions arising from practice’.¹¹² These traditions avail us of particular ‘resources and discourses that frame understanding of development’. This is also supportive of *technē* as a form of reasoning.

Broadly speaking, of these, thinking of the kind that takes place via the virtues of *epistēmē*, *nous* and *sophia* are concerned with things as they are, in other words, what *cannot* be ‘otherwise’ (NE 1139b21). Like *technē*, *phronēsis* deals with ‘contingent truths’ (Brown, 2009: xv): what can be ‘otherwise’. Peters (Aristotle, 2004) translates such truths as ‘alterable’ (1140b3). These truths emerge from fashioning (or manipulation). In this sense there is malleability about this work. Aubenque (1963: 65) describes *phronēsis* as anchored in an ontological ‘of what can be otherwise’.¹¹³ And again, like *technē*, *phronēsis* is thinking of a practical nature and is sometimes translated as ‘practical wisdom’ (Brown, 2009: 269). Inevitably though, different translations bring different nuances to the fore. A translation remains, as Aubenque describes, an ‘interpretation’ (1963: 55).

One way in which *phronēsis* has been captured in English is by the use of the word ‘prudence’. This stems from the Latin tradition of using ‘*prudentia*’ Aubenque (1963: 3). Peterson and Seligman (2004) trace this particular lineage as follows. Aquinas in his work on Aristotle, used ‘*prudentia*’ ‘a term derived by contraction from the Latin *provideo*, meaning “foresight” or “farsightedness” (Zagzebski, 1996). It is to Aquinas that we owe the modern term.’ (479).¹¹⁴ Although Peterson and Seligman do not dispute that the modern view of the term ‘prudence’ has a ‘somewhat narrower and different sense’ (481), they choose to use this as the working term. In their classification of strengths,

¹¹² The other traditions are moral, artistic and scientific (Coldron and Smith).

¹¹³ In situ this reads as follows: << *la prudence se meut dans le domaine du contingent, c’est-à-dire de ce qui peut être autrement qu’il n’est ... La théorie de la prudence est ... d’une ontologie de la contingence* >> (Aubenque, 1963: 65 [italics as in the original]).

¹¹⁴ For further discussion of this in Zagzebski (1996), see in particular pages 212 and 230.

prudence is placed within the collective group of ‘temperance’ (430), featuring alongside ‘forgiveness and mercy’, ‘humility and modesty’ and ‘self-regulation’. These are the strengths that ‘protect against excess’ (30). Contextualised in this way, prudence as one of the temperate strengths, is ‘a form of self-denial that is ultimately generous to the self or others’ (38). In effect by finding itself translated as such, it falls naturally into this group.

Nonetheless, Peterson and Seligman state that prudence should be viewed as a virtue which ‘implies harmony and balance’, as well as ‘constraint, caution, and conformity’ (2004: 481). But while they do not gloss over the rich aspect of Aristotle’s view of *phronēsis* and the way in which this has been used more recently by psychologists, and neither do they discount the fact that their own work on classifications will continue to evolve (31), their description of prudence is quite limiting. Prudence is ‘Being careful about one’s choices; *not* taking undue risks; *not* saying or doing things that might later be regretted’ [italics as in original] (2004: 30). There are, nonetheless, a number of themes emerging from Peterson and Seligman’s work on prudence, which in combination with Aristotle’s presentation in *Nicomachean Ethics*, are useful to consider. This I will do shortly.

Those who translate *phronēsis* as ‘prudence’ in their editions of *Nicomachean Ethics* include Bartlett and Collins, Rackham, and Peters. Rowe prefers ‘wisdom’ and Ross ‘practical wisdom’. Irwin translates the term as ‘intelligence’. In turn, Pakaluk refers to practical wisdom as ‘sagacity’ (2005: 225). Barnes uses ‘practical wisdom’ in his translation of *Politics* (Aristotle, 1996). My working preference is for ‘practical wisdom’. I consider that this captures the sense of ‘intelligent awareness in general’ that Irwin refers to (1985: 411). I also consider that *phronēsis* may lose some of its burnished quality if the term prudence is used, simply because it becomes distanced, albeit artificially, from intellectual wisdom (*sophia*). However, when I draw upon a particular edition of *Nicomachean Ethics* I use the translation as presented.

Consonance and dissonance

It is against this backdrop of intellectual virtues as presented by Aristotle, and consideration of the translated term for practical wisdom, that I move on to

investigate how a teacher of practical wisdom might act when dealing with (intellectual) disturbances in learning. Aristotle asks us first to consider the person ‘whom we say to be prudent’ (NE 1140a25) - in ancient Greek, a *phronimos*. Immediately, the concept is personalised, and by so doing, is humanised. In this way we look to the *phronimos*, not the virtue itself. Hence, the person of practical wisdom features in our lives - and presents us with a role model. A personification of *phronēsis* is therefore critical to our understanding, and (assuming the right conditions are present, including our habituation) our wish to emulate.

Aristotle suggests that such a person demonstrates the characteristic of deliberation (NE 1140a26). Furthermore, the deliberation is on matters about ‘living well’ (1140a28), and ‘not in a partial way’ (1140a27), but ‘in general’ (1140a28-29). The goal is some ‘serious end’. Therefore, the inference is that such deliberation forms part of the goal, an eudaimonistic life. Additionally, and seemingly in opposition to the ‘self-denial’ of the type of prudence mentioned earlier identified by Peterson and Seligman (2004: 38), the deliberations are, according to Aristotle, ‘advantageous’ (NE 1140a26) for the *phronimos*. There is, then, a presentation of practical wisdom as ‘architectonic’ (1141b23 and 26).

With this overview in mind - that of the human efficacy of a *phronimos* and *phronēsis* at base as a coherent set of virtuous characteristics - I proceed to interpret a ‘case study’, which has at its heart learning disturbance and disagreement. I consider how, had the teacher recognised moments of disturbance and had developed and displayed characteristics of practical wisdom in response to these, this case study might have read differently.

The case study (Silverman, 2008) primarily concerns the processes involved in constructing the interpretation of a Chopin *Mazurka* (*Opus 24, Number 4*) and the implications therein.¹¹⁵ Marissa Silverman approaches this analysis in dialogue with the Russian pianist Gregory Haimovsky. What is of particular interest for the purposes of the current discussion is the impact on Haimovsky of

¹¹⁵ A mazurka is a ‘Polish folk-dance in a moderate to fast triple time with the second of third beat often strongly accented. First adapted as a stylised piece for piano by Chopin, who wrote 52 mazurkas’ (Westrup and Harrison, 1959: 416).

the teaching and learning relationship between he and a music teacher, Yakov Zak. It must be said that Zak's point of view (if indeed it were available) is not elicited in Silverman's research. Throughout the following analysis and interpretation I am mindful of this. I am also mindful that Haimovsky is one individual student: his voice is not necessarily representative, nor does it set out to be. There is also the cultural tradition of Russian pianistic pedagogy at the time to take into consideration.¹¹⁶

The lessons between Zak and Haimovsky took place at the renowned Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow. As a general comment on the lessons themselves, Haimovsky had this to say about the teacher-student relationship: 'When coming for a lesson with Yakov Zak, my intentions were noble and he understood that' (Silverman, 2008: 263). Given Aristotle's precision about the importance of the 'noble' (as discussed in the previous chapter), it is interesting to see this word used in a more current setting. And it is valuable for a more balanced understanding that we are cognisant of this more positive aspect of their teacher-student relationship. Furthermore, Haimovsky notes that Zak provided him with 'a discipline of ear and fingers' (263), a crucial consideration for a music student. It seems that neither were dodging their responsibilities, such is the conscientiousness displayed. Nonetheless, various issues emerge from the account, which are of particular interest when considering the importance of practical wisdom and its presence within the remit of teacher as role model. I focus on a number of these.

Interpreting issues

One issue is that of mismanagement of detail and overview. Zak would heavily annotate Haimovsky's score in a bid to overcome the technical problems. Incredulity at this approach still shines through years later. Zak would 'spend two hours just writing over each sound' (Silverman, 2008: 263). What the teacher needs to drive towards for the student's learning may not, of course, be immediately evident. But certain features of the situation will, if allowed, come to the fore. Schön (1982: 104) refers to this as surfacing the problem, both in

¹¹⁶ For further discussion of this see Silverman, 2008: 266, Note 3.

context and scope. But it seems here that this was not allowed to happen and that the student was overloaded, and hence, confused.

One of the aspects, then, that Zak seems to have overlooked is that of **the general and the particular** and, in terms of practical wisdom, their interconnections and the inherent guidance they might offer. I am not arguing that dealing with issues such as these is an easy matter - in this particular case, that of dealing with technical pianistic demands with an eye to the general and the particular. There may be for example many problems to consider - such as this student's other needs and the balance required in the short term and the longer term; or, the demands of the music and the requirement for an introduction to a particular musical style or approach. In the case of group teaching, the group's issues (for example, being held back by one student's lack of understanding) may need to be considered as well and then there are the teacher's needs (for example, health, relative inexperience). Nonetheless, Zac appears to have been motivated by excessive detail, especially when judged in relation to this student's ability to respond at this particular juncture. And this manifestation of excessive detail formed a reoccurring pattern. With the mean as a guiding (intellectual and characterful) premise, there might have been more opportunity for a consideration of the general and the particular. Fortenbaugh (2002: 73) is correct to state: 'Hitting upon the mean is a critical act and therefore properly referred to [as] a cognitive perfection'.

Since practical wisdom is action (an aspect I will return to), Aristotle considers that it is necessary to be knowledgeable about the landscape of both 'universals' and 'particulars' (*NE* 1141b15-16). The latter comes only with experience. Aristotle leans in on this aspect: 'a long period of time creates experience' (*NE* 1142a16). Students can be skilled in mathematics for example, but not yet in practical wisdom. It is unrealistic for example to expect a young person to display *phronēsis*. A little later in *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle speaks about the 'experienced eye' 'see[ing] correctly' (1143b14).¹¹⁷ Nor (and here I am interpreting *NE* 1140b28-30 with a degree of largesse) can the practical wisdom accrued be forgotten: underlying all is the disposition - that of *phronimos*.

¹¹⁷ Aristotle also makes it clear that some people will remain immature (*NE* 1095a8).

Practical wisdom is replenished, and perhaps deepened, through different experiences, but remains a core thread. This is because practical wisdom does not rely solely on intellectual virtues (knowledge, and therefore more easily forgotten); but, also on habit, that is to say, moral virtue (which is more easily recalled). I will return to habituation as an aspect integral to practical wisdom, specifically that of sensitivity to the situation.

The ‘seeing’ that Aristotle speaks about requires **comprehension**. In the face of some aspect that perplexes us and requires deliberation we need to comprehend (NE 1143a8). While ‘comprehension’ and practical wisdom are linked, there is a key difference. Practical wisdom deals with ‘the giving of commands’ (1143a9). These arise from deliberations as to what ought to be done, or not (1143a9-10). Hence, these deliberations, premised on understanding, lead to a practical outcome. In contrast, ‘comprehension’ - *sunesis* - is ‘characterised by decision alone’ (1143a10).¹¹⁸

Translated by some as ‘understanding’, Ross (2009) and Rackham (1934), this process of comprehension is of ‘seeing a point’ (Rowe, 2002: 1143a19). *Sunesis* can be used in either of two senses: (a) a student learns particular subject matter and (b) a person of experience has command of this subject matter and is able to exercise it (Broadie, 2002: 377). Aristotle draws on the second. Through the act of ‘seeing’, an individual - by implication, the *phronimos* - is able to make use of ‘opinion to render a decision about what someone else says’ (NE 1143a14-15). The process of comprehension continues with this weighing up of the opinion. It is for the *phronimos* to decide whether or not it should be applied (via action). I take this to include for example the reasoning behind technical decisions leading to skilled music making, and when and how best to teach the student. If forced or inappropriate for that learning stage, the music and the student are out of kilter with one another. There may be more chance for example of a breakdown during performance, or at least the inability to sustain the level (technical, stylistic or of emotion) needed for a performance of that piece. Recalling the vignettes of Chapter 1, this was a contributing factor perhaps for the teenage cellist.

¹¹⁸ Bartlett and Collins (2011: 128, Note 49) explain that they convey one word (*kritikē*) by a phrase (‘characterised by decision’). The root of *kritikē* is ‘the verb meaning to distinguish, judge, decide, or determine (*krinene*)’. The English word ‘crisis’ is linked to both words, a crisis being ‘the moment when the crucial decision or determination will be made’.

It also needs to be stated here that implicit in ‘understanding’ is that the understanding is of a certain quality: it is ‘good understanding’ (NE 1143a 11-12). The inference is that the judgement and action ensuing from the comprehension will be appropriate. Understood as functioning within these parameters, comprehension has two key aspects. It is a ‘critical quality’ (Ross in Aristotle, 2009: Book 6, Chapter 10, heading) *and* it serves as the foot servant of practical wisdom. It is not enough either to be clever. Although cleverness is needed as part of practical wisdom (NE 1144a30), it can be shaped towards the wrong ends. Cleverness thus becomes corrupted. ‘For corruption distorts and causes one to be mistaken about the principles bound up with action’ (1144a35-36). We see the corrosive effect of corrupted thinking in the film *Whiplash* when the leader (Terence Fletcher) castigates a particular music group towards achieving musical acclaim. Here the music director is clever technically and musically but the intents and purposes he uses this for, lead the student (Andrew Neiman) mentally and physically to the precipice. (In the film the focus dwells more on a particular student, not the jazz group.) We can say the director is manipulative and thus has a corrosive effect on his students.

Having established that comprehension is required, what does good **deliberation** in a person of practical wisdom look like, and how might it differ from a person who does not yet have the quality of practical wisdom? The characteristic of deliberation (*euboulia*) - translated by Rowe (Aristotle, 2002) as ‘deliberative excellence’ (1142b7) - is not presented as a primary virtue of the intellect. Nonetheless, its characteristics are teased out by Aristotle, who is keen to clarify these - and their relationship with practical wisdom. What he does is to interweave these singular characteristics with his account of practical wisdom.

‘Good deliberation’ is of the kind that ‘guides us correctly toward the end simply’ (NE 1142b30-31). In contrast, ‘a specific sort of deliberation is what guides us correctly toward some particular end’ (1142b31-32). Aristotle continues: ‘So if having deliberated well belongs to those who are prudent, good deliberation would be a correctness that accords with what is advantageous in relation to the end, about which end prudence is a true conviction’ (1142b32-34). The former seems to be correct deliberation but on a shallower level; the latter seems to be correct at a deeper level for it apprehends the issue in all its

totality, rightly attributing its true end. However, this is a particularly tricky passage to interpret.

In relation to the passage, Rackham writes that whereas deliberative excellence concerns the (intellectual) process, practical wisdom is ‘the more permanent and fixed quality of the mind possessing and contemplating the results of such investigations’ (Aristotle, 1934: 356, Note ‘c’). However Rackham notes that a stricter interpretation would be that both form part of prudence (practical wisdom), hence deliberative excellence forms an aspect of prudence. In contrast, the translation by Ross draws this passage to a close as follows: ‘... which practical wisdom apprehends truly’ (Aristotle, 2009: 1142b37-36). In accompanying notes to this translation Brown (2009: 240) writes that the ancient Greek can be read in two ways: that practical wisdom ‘apprehends truly (a) the end or (b) what conduces to the end’. The former is more likely according to Brown. But if this is the case, Brown notes that this does not tally with a person of practical wisdom having a significant understanding of ‘what conduces to the end’ (specifically, Chapter 6, Book 5). In Book 5, having an understanding of the end *and*, critically, of the process it takes and the decisions it may involve, is presented as forming part of good deliberation; in other words, this combination is a signature strength of practical wisdom. Without this it would fail to gather together the other virtues. Practical wisdom is valued for its integrative nature. And without this integrative aspect, it would not, I think, have Aristotle singling it out in the way he does, including where (we are to believe) he positioned it in his *Nicomachean Ethics* lectures (that is to say, its main exposition comes after the investigation of moral and intellectual virtues). Whichever interpretation of this passage may be the favoured one, the fact is that such a person (the *phronimos*) would be aware of ‘what is advantageous in relation to the end’ (*NE* 1142b35) - he or she would have this in mind. The deliberation to be both ‘correct’ and ‘good’ needs to alight on the right action through correct reasoning and the right means (1142b21-24) and, as evidenced in *Whiplash*, be oriented towards an appropriate end.

Given that choice is an outcome of ‘prior deliberation’ (*NE* 1112a16), deliberation can be described as future-orientated (1139b8-9). The territory is unclear: ‘... deliberating occurs ... where it is unclear how [matters] ... will turn

out and in which something is undetermined' (1112b8-9). Or put another way: 'we deliberate about all those things that come about through us but that do not always do so in the same way' (1112b3). Deliberation is concerned with the important - that I have already noted, and takes place within a context that displays some ambiguities, such as anomaly. Such deliberation identifies, and respects, the unknown and important qualities in ways not seen in Zac's teaching of this particular student.

Aristotle also asserts, at least what initially seems to be, the importance of temporal contrast in the deliberative process and ensuing action: people 'deliberate slowly', but act on these deliberations 'swiftly' (*NE* 1142b5). Later though, this is discounted in favour of 'correctness' (1142b28). This does not mean however that timely action is unimportant: timely action constitutes an aspect of *euboulia* (1142b29). In respect to Egan's staged theory this is an important point. A student should not for example be left to linger over learning material that is 'entertaining'.

As I have already stated, it is clear that both Zac and Haimovsky were conscientious (note for example, the care taken in annotating the score to alleviate technical problems). It is worth therefore considering for a moment whether there are links between **conscientiousness** and practical wisdom. Trait psychologists, working with five broad aspects of personality, have identified 'conscientiousness' - an aspect that has, Peterson and Seligman (2004: 482) argue, close links with Aristotelian *phronēsis*. The trait, (and those others clustered around conscientiousness), looks to the longer term, is not impulsive, reveals practical intelligence and is reflective. But, conversely, Peterson and Seligman identify limitations. Firstly, the trait is captured by an inductive description, not by a theory of underlying processes. Prudence (their preferred term for *phronēsis*) on the other hand offers a 'theoretical framing' (482). Secondly, the dynamic nature of prudence is neglected: that is, the cognitive and the volitional aspects (482-3). This compromises an appreciation of prudence as a complex virtue. Thirdly, the conscientiousness factor captures more within conscientiousness, for example sense of duty or order, than would normally be identified with prudence (483). These, for example duty, also tend towards shared moral or social goals, a restrained type of behaviour and

particular contexts, for example, the work place. In contrast, prudence is bound up with personal goals. These are self-managed (proactively) and form part of the individual's overall life. This leads Peterson and Seligman (2004: 483) to the conclusion that it is preferable to regard this trait as related but incidental, to the underlying aspects of prudence. Thus, however conscientious the teacher is, conscientiousness is not a strong indicator of practical wisdom.

Another issue which emerges from the case study by Silverman seems to have been that the teacher did not consider the student's own technical needs in relation to the piece of music. Here we have to assume from Haimovsky's description that he was in the alimantal domain, for on the face of it, at least he was able to manage Zak's technical directions; nonetheless this seems at times to border on the inert, and it is not clear whether his teacher was aware of this. Haimovsky states: 'I could learn what he wanted from me, but when I involved my inner self, I would forget everything' (Silverman, 2008: 263). The effort demanded in acquisition via practice is clear in this description by Sacks (2007: 209). He writes:

Practice involves conscious application, monitoring what one is doing, bringing all one's intelligence and sensibility and values to bear - even though what is so painfully and consciously acquired may then become automatic, coded in motor patterns at a subcortical level.

Aristotle is concerned too with the quality of practice. With what might be described as wry humour he states, (and as already noted in Chapter 2): 'For it is as a result of playing the cithara that both good and bad cithara players arise' (*NE* 1103b9-10). So here, veritabily for Haimovsky, is a struggle, both physical and musical.

Firstly, the physical struggle. 'My hands were different from his. It did not matter. He would insist.' (Silverman, 2008: 263).¹¹⁹ There is a lack of supportive

¹¹⁹ For a different perspective on this, see Cook (1990: in particular 77-83). Through a careful series of argumentative moves, Cook demonstrates that facility in a pianist's fingering is not purely about the practical. Judicious use of fingering may serve to emphasise an important moment in a piece's structure for example. This is implicitly conveyed by the teacher in their choice of fingering, that is to say, the (abstract) thinking is applied and without discussion.

technical help evident here. It is notable that, of the three qualities that Fleming considers a music (vocal) teacher should have, the first two, respectively, are '**diagnostic skill**' and the ability to '**prescribe solutions**' (2004: 53). Boe (Boe and Godfrey, 2012) also makes this point about the importance of carefully localised nurturing, be it technical or otherwise. Boe discusses this ability to nurture (the singing voice) through two different examples. The first is presented as opportunity missed, the second example as opportunity realised. 'Instead of realising what abilities we had, and working with those abilities and nurturing them, it seemed to me like they [a particular teaching programme] basically wanted to slam us on the floor' (2012: 139). In this instance the teaching is viewed from the student viewpoint as poor or taking place with the wrong goal in mind. The importance of good teachers is reaffirmed in this second, and contrasting, description. 'I found a great singing teacher while I was working in New York later on, Bill Schuman - he's been an incredible help ... and he seriously turned my voice around' (138). The diagnostic ability to bring the (Aristotelian) 'universals' and the 'particulars' together for the benefit of the student's learning are implicitly conveyed by both Fleming and Boe. Zac's student (in the case study by now a mature professional pianist) writes: 'I do not believe in technique in general terms. Horowitz's technique had nothing in common with Richter's.'¹²⁰ It means your personality applies to your technical managing of materials' (Silverman, 2008: 263). In this latter sentence we have a window into the second struggle, that of allowing musical intellect to flourish.

Secondly, then, is Haimovsky not only learning to 'overcome' or meet challenges but also an additional and crucial challenge, that of **developing an interpretation** himself. Like the GCSE violinist and her work on developing an interpretation described in Chapter 1, here is a student pianist trying to do the same. Unlike the violinist though, the student pianist received a prescriptive interpretation from the teacher. 'But speaking stylistically, about being authentic, he completely distorted everything that my intuition, if left alone, would have understood. If he did not intervene in such a way, I would have instinctively found my way to different styles' (Silverman, 2008: 263). In effect, what seems to have happened is that the stylistic aspect remained in the inert

¹²⁰ Both Horowitz and Richter were renowned pianists.

domain for longer than might be considered necessary. Perhaps this was a case of the teacher not adapting his teaching approach to the individual student, a student who is identified as having a ‘strong tendency towards independent thought’ (264).

It is notable that Haimovsky, (who is by now steeped in knowledge and understanding of pianistic traditions), does not rely on received interpretation. For instance, Silverman describes his method of working on the Chopin mazurka, the focus of the research article, as taking place over several months (2008: 265). He is also respectful, in a way that Zak by implication is not, of the listener’s preference. Haimovsky and Silverman agreed for example to differ on which one of two performances of the mazurka each preferred (261-262). Both performances had integrity. In this way music is useful in the curriculum simply because different performances of the same piece or song can offer ‘multiple solutions’ (265). At this point in the discussion, it is useful to think about **the notion of will**. Perhaps Zac and Haimovsky, both seemingly strong characters, had a clash of will. But more importantly for the purposes of this discussion, what does the will contribute to practical wisdom as part of an eudaimonistic life? We have already observed for example Haimovsky’s incredulity at Zak’s heavy annotation of the score. Zac’s approach in relation to this demonstrates an iron will. Peterson and Seligman (2004: 487-488) make the observation that Ainslie (2001) identifies ‘will’ as a tactical move which has at its base, self-governing ‘rules’. These ‘legislative’ rules need to be flexible (488). This is a prescient summing up, and expresses how the will can reflect self-restraint - or not.

Originally ‘will’ was synonymous with failure: it was ‘defined by the situation in which it failed’ (Ainslie 2001: 4). Aristotle referred to this condition as ‘weakness of will’ - *akrasia* (Ainslie, 2001: 4). Bartlett and Collins refer to both sides of the coin: ‘lack of self-restraint’ (*akrasia*) and ‘self-restraint’ (*enkrateia*), (2011: 4, Note 15).¹²¹ In effect, there is a conflict between short and long-term goals, and this conflict impinges on motivation. In the following,

¹²¹ Aristotle considers self-restraint and the lack of it in Book 7 of *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Socrates explains the wrong move, which leads to what Ainslie refers to as ‘failure’.

“And if you weigh pleasant against painful, if the painful are outweighed by the pleasant, no matter which are nearer and which more distant, you have to do whatever brings the pleasant about, and if the pleasant are outweighed by the painful, you have to avoid doing it. Isn’t that the way it is?” (Plato, 1991, *Protagoras*, 356a6-c2)¹²²

Socrates makes the point that the ‘pleasant’ may involve the ‘painful’ (355a): but at what cost? There is by Socrates’ account inevitability about the situation.

But this matter of the will, self-restrained or not, goes beyond inevitability, for this move can involve **judgement**. Judgement can prise open the door. But judgement is a difficult matter, involving additional (or other) methods to that of the simple method of measurement.¹²³ These methods include ‘hypotheses of the likely effects of possible actions, and some sort of imaginative comparison of the various effects thus envisaged, both aspects of the process in turn relying on memory of similar effects and similar comparisons in the past’ (Taylor, Notes: 1991, 196). Once again, the importance of experience well used comes to the fore. Gradually, an appropriate coherency to a person’s life may begin to emerge. The importance of a coherent whole is what seems to be partly reflected in the bestowal of a New Orleans jazz funeral, an occasion to which I will refer to again in Chapter 7. So, in addition to the skill of comprehension already discussed, a person of practical wisdom will be able to discriminate appropriately in relation to *gnōmē* - ‘judgement’. Following closely Rackham’s translation (1934)¹²⁴, such a person would give due consideration to a situation. If a judgement is appropriate, it will be that of ‘a correct decision as to what is equitable’; further, the judgement will be correct because it ‘grasps what is truly equitable’ (NE 1143a24 [translation by Bartlett and Collins]).

¹²² Protagoras was the first travelling professor in ancient Greece (Taylor, 1991: 61).

¹²³ Similarly, the (Aristotelian) mean can never be established by measurement alone. It would not be enough for example for Zac to self monitor by reducing the time annotating the student’s music score to a quarter of the lesson for example.

¹²⁴ Practical wisdom is ‘the more permanent and fixed quality of the mind possessing and contemplating the results of such investigations’ (Rackham, 1934: 356, Note ‘c’). This is the more flexible of the two interpretative translations that Rackham discusses.

To return now to the matter of the independent thought that is needed in approaching how to construct a particular performance of a piece, developed virtue does more than ‘accord’ with correct reason: it is ‘accompanied’ by correct reason (*NE* 1144b26-28). Translated by Peters as ‘implying right reason’, he interprets this as follows: ‘the agent must not only be guided by reason, but by his own reason, not another’s’ (2004: 240, Book 6, Chapter 13, note 30). In other words, the individual is the prime mover and must take responsibility. Aristotle sums up the strong relationship between that of character virtue and practical wisdom.

It is clear ... there will be no correct choice in the absence of prudence, nor in the absence of virtue; for the latter makes one carry out the end, the former the things conducive to the end (*NE* 1145a4-7).

Unfortunately, the teacher-student relationship between Zak and Haimovsky seems to demonstrate on the one hand, heightened sensitivity (that of the student) and on the other hand, a lack of sensitivity (that of the teacher). Clearly, as noted by Egan, there needs to be sensitivity on the part of the teacher. And Fleming frames this sensitivity as a teacher who is **strong interpersonally**. She refers to this as the third necessary quality of a good teacher. In discussing this aspect, Fleming states that the teacher ‘needs to be able to read her students’ (2004: 54). The inference is that the teacher must do this in order to be able to draw the best from the student. Fleming continues by citing flexibility, again an attribute flagged up by Egan (and Aristotle). The teacher, Fleming writes, ‘has to teach differently for different personalities and for different stages of development’ (54). The damage that can be done when this does not happen is evident in the discussion of Haimovsky’s learning.

Conversely, and this looks back to Gardner’s points about how students observe teachers, the teacher must ‘have a keen sense of how she is being perceived’ (Fleming, 2004: 54). This constitutes feedback and can lead to self-correction in the sense of monitoring one’s response (if that is the appropriate thing to do given the circumstances understood through experience). Continuing with a particular approach in an unrelenting way (as Zac did with Haimovsky) is damaging. Haimovsky was in Zac’s mind ‘an idiot’ (Silverman, 2008: 263). As a

consequence, it was to take a decade or so for Haimovsky to develop ‘his own [pianistic] voice’ (263). In the normal scheme of things this may not seem such a long period for artistic maturation, but there is no doubt that this period was critically disturbing and deeply unhelpful. It does seem far removed from what Egan is advocating, that of a rich and varied learning diet, and responsive to the learner’s needs - with the long-term aspiration of being comfortable within the ironic stage.

Given that learning is rarely straightforward, (and this is made explicit in the case study just explored and in Egan’s four learning stages and three domains of access to learning material), what a teacher does and how it is carried out is of significance. Regarding this lack of straightforwardness, Egan for example, speaks about the occurrence of temporary regression (1986: 92). And Fleming writes: ‘Learning how to sing is rarely a process that follows a straight line, and it’s rarely clearer than fog until one grasps it in its totality’ (2004: 42). This is where the interaction between the inculcation of moral virtue and resultant stability of **habit** - so important to practical wisdom - is a necessity if **sensitivity** is deemed important. These habits ‘instil a sensitivity as to how to act in various circumstances’ (Lear, 1988: 166). Lear embellishes further the notion of sensitivity: it needs to be ‘conscious sensitivity to the demands of a situation’ (172). The importance of such sensitivity was inferred in Gardner’s identification of two aspects of teachers’ work, as noted earlier: their interaction, and their reaction to students’ work (2008: 141). As in the case study involving the student pianist, a professional may fall short. This point about situational sensitivity is a crucial one as sometimes there can be no hard-and-fast rules as to what is the appropriate action. That is, after all, why practical wisdom is required.

In addition, although acting the right way may spring from habituation, thus ‘relatively un-self-consciously’ (Lear, 1988: 186), reflection is required for this to become a self-conscious activity - and thus being in the position to refute or endorse one’s actions. Following on from this, it stands to reason that if practical wisdom is concerned with opinion and deliberation leading to action, reflection of this ‘self conscious’ active kind lies within it. Aristotle is clear that ‘a reflecting mind’ is crucial (*Politics* 1324b23) and should be directed towards

the right things (in this particular instance, away from tyranny). Both prudence and reflection are constructs that are viewed by intellectual psychologists as ‘bridging the personality and cognitive ability domains’ (Peterson and Seligman (2004: 485). This bridging reflects Aristotle’s case for linking moral and intellectual virtue within *phronēsis* (NE 1145a4-7).

Another way of looking at practical wisdom is that of how individuals approach and navigate their way through particular ‘units’ (Peterson and Seligman 2004: 486); that is to say, personal projects and the like. Here the matter of balance and coherent action, crucial in Aristotle’s account, form an aspect of the dimensions that the researchers consider.¹²⁵ Aristotle clearly makes the point that practical wisdom is ‘bound up with action, accompanied by reason, and concerned with things good and bad for a human being’ (NE 1140b5-7). He draws a comparison with the other principal intellectual virtues. As already noted, *phronēsis*, unlike *epistēmē*, *nous* and *sophia*, is of what can be ‘otherwise’ (1140a33); practical wisdom, unlike *technē* where the end is the product, is concerned with an end which is the very act of ‘acting well’ (1140b9). This is its distinctive feature.

Aristotle describes **the action** as concerned with the ‘ultimate particular thing’ (NE 11142a25). *Phronēsis* ‘becomes fully practical’ only at its conclusion (Broadie, Commentary, 2002: 374). ‘Deliberating well’ (NE 1141b11) is thus a key aspect of practical wisdom, for the person whose judgement has been distorted will not be able to apprehend the principles needed for prudent action (1140b18-19). Such a person is not ‘in possession of the truth’ (1140b21). Hence, there is a need for appropriate training and education - and, crucially, at the appropriate moment and over the appropriate amount of time, and all things in balance. In addition, Aristotle argues that in terms of action, much rests on alighting on key principles.

¹²⁵ Peterson and Seligman (2004: 486) refer to work in this domain by Little, Lecci and Watkinson (1991) and Emmons and King (1988).

Some principles [of action] are observed by means of induction [logic], some by perception, some by certain habituation, and others in other ways ... For they are of great weight in what follows from them: the beginning [point or 'principle'] seems to be more than half of the whole, and many of the points being sought seem to become manifest on account of it. (NE 1098b4-9)¹²⁶

A *phronimos* develops a repertoire from which to draw as and when, and appropriately. In practical wisdom, action is based on quite searching principles and is thus action of substance.

Further to the emphasis on the importance of action (including its temporal aspect), actions are identified as dealing with the 'particular' but *are themselves* the 'ultimate things' (NE 1142a33-35). Actions become in a sense concrete: that is, objectifications of sensible and sensitive thought. This is how important the cluster of attributes characteristic of practical wisdom are proved to be. They propel. Action not only 'is', but 'speaks' aloud the quality of these virtues. There also needs to be a word of caution in this respect. It is evident too that an individual's actions, which may look on the face of them those of a *phronimos*, may not be. The root of the motivations may (and as previously noted) lie elsewhere, for example, acting correctly but for external reasons (such as following the law of the land). In contrast, a *phronimos* will be doing these actions for the right reasons. In sum, Aristotle is at pains to emphasise the very act of 'acting well' (1140b9). He states (1139a22-28):

... since moral virtue is a characteristic marked by choice, and choice is longing marked by deliberation, then on account of these considerations, the reasoning involved must be true and the longing correct, if in fact the choice is a serious one, and what the reasoning asserts must be the same as what the longing pursues. This, then, is the thinking and the truth concerned with action.

¹²⁶ The information in the second and third square brackets is taken from notes 48 and 49 by Bartlett and Collins (2011: 14), and is incorporated for additional clarity. The first I add for contextual clarity.

Conclusion

Having argued that developed virtue cannot exist without practical wisdom (*NE* 1144b18) the usefulness of *phronēsis* is presented by Aristotle on a number of levels: motivational, integrative, and right thinking. Given that Aristotle has established that the young are not yet ready to display practical wisdom, it is worth drawing attention to Aristotle's gradations in terms of the relative illustriousness of the professional. No professional arrives fully-fledged. (We saw this in the case of O'Hara, the clinician.) He refers to physicians, but let us apply to this a professional in any sphere. There are three types: the 'ordinary practitioner', the 'master' professional and the person 'educated in the art' (*Politics* 1282a3-5). This assumes some kind of upward trajectory. Where in this trajectory of professional development is the colleague of practical wisdom recognisable? I would argue that students should be taught by professionals who, even at the 'ordinary' level, should be capable of demonstrating practical wisdom - or at least to some developing degree. In the face of challenges, I would hope that the young teaching professional would display an awareness and openness to the development of practical wisdom and that furthermore, role models were available, much in the way of the clinician. Without this professional support, teaching in this way could be a lonely endeavour. And students lose out, particularly during periods when learning disturbance is causing acute demands and (diagnostic) support is required. We noted before for example that Egan (1986: 107) speaks about the need for intellectual courage during such periods. Practical wisdom is key therefore to the function that is teacher.

I suggest too that there is a further complicating factor in music performance with regard to the mean. Bringing a measured response to the following is demanding and, I argue, benefits from the reflected-upon experience that a *phronimos* accrues. Here, then, I show the particularly difficult nature of mean as concurrent extremity. The mean must at times, I posit, involve the overlapping of respective means or ends of a particular continuum during a particular human activity. For example, two elements that can each be considered quintessential to a music performer's development are those of

passion and discipline.¹²⁷ These are identified by Barenboim in his conversation with Rusbridger (2013: 210)¹²⁸; but the important point Barenboim is making is that elements require mutual coexistence. He argues that music is, furthermore, a place within which you can learn about the possibility of such coexistence. Holding in mind the basic underlying premise of the mean is further complicated by the consideration of such coexistence: a balancing act is to be had. And there is no doubt that fractured phases in a musician's life can occur because of a mismatch in the overlay required. In the previous chapter we saw how Rubinstein (1980) provided reflection on the perils of leaning on one, in his case, 'passion', to the detriment of the other, 'discipline'. Other performers may mix virtuosity with courage. If nothing else, music shows us how to live with mutually coexisting or layering of extremes - the mean may actually be an encapsulation of several. Nonetheless, this can be demanding musically and requires careful judgement if for example, burnout¹²⁹, is to be avoided.

Moreover, earlier I referred to the 'architectonic' (NE 1141b23 and 26) aspect of practical wisdom. Its contribution to a life well lived, an eudaimonistic life, forms an integral part of such a life. Throughout this chapter, that Aristotle regards the person of 'practical wisdom' with respect is clear. In *Politics* Aristotle identifies practical wisdom as an attribute that differentiates someone who rules from that of an ordinary subject (1277b26-28). It would be difficult, nowadays, to argue the case in support of this differentiation. And as a consequence, I have moved from the life of the *polis* to consider practical wisdom in the important context of professional life as music educator. But what it does do is to show its value - an excellence 'above' other excellences. Aristotle approaches life in an 'open-ended' manner, including 'its needs and possibilities', while at the same time being grounded in 'the concrete

¹²⁷ Presented as a single continuum, these could be argued as follows: passion↔discipline↔apathy, with 'discipline' providing the mean. Nonetheless, if presented as opposites as in my argument, this is nothing new to ancient Greek thought. This type of contradictory unity of two opposites forms part of their approach to thinking, for example, centripetal and centrifugal forces (Hall, 2015: 16).

¹²⁸ Rusbridger, an amateur pianist, is determined to play Chopin's *Ballade No. 1 in G Minor, Op. 23*, a challenge even for a professional pianist. As part of his quest, he meets luminaries, including the musician Barenboim, to discuss the many issues involved.

¹²⁹ Boe in his description of issues (as included earlier in this chapter) can be argued as alluding to burnout (Boe and Godfrey, 2012: 91).

circumstances of history and culture’ (Nussbaum, 1993: 259). In describing the *phronimos* as displaying a perspective which is one of a practical overview (concrete totality), Aubenque (1963: 57) also reveals support for this interpretation.¹³⁰ In a very real way, I think that Aristotle’s conception of practical wisdom epitomises his ‘commitment to the human good and to ‘contextual sensitivity’ (Nussbaum, 1993: 259). The flexibility as evidenced in a *phronimos* is hard-won however. The decisions, as made through deliberation, judgement and action, need to be defended. It is important therefore that teachers are capable of modelling such characteristics and that students themselves learn to build towards (substantiated) ‘independent thought’ (Silverman, 2008: 264).

And I think it is here that the importance of an artwork (broadly conceived) starts to re-emerge. If I take the (broad) view that an artwork (of quality) is an outcome of good deliberation, judgement and action, then it is possible to take the view that an artwork is a fully realised embodiment of these characteristics. I explain a little more. In the same way that the person of ironic stature strives towards ‘an increasing mastery of something in particular’ (Egan, 1986: 135), the realisation of the artwork is (partly) a positive commitment towards mastery through working intensively with, and on, the material at hand. Attention is focused in order to ‘forge new intellectual tools for better representing some particular truth about the world or experience’ (135). ‘That is’, Egan continues, ‘there will be an intense, but not exclusive, specialization’. Issuing from this, I argue that it is possible for intense specialisation of this nature to be viewed as being that of an (embodied) artwork. If this is the case, this may be in the form of excellent activity not only of the music performer but also of the *phronimos*.

I explain this as follows. The *Grand Fugue (Grosse Fuge)* is a work of intense specialisation. This movement brings the *String Quartet, No. 13 in Bb Major, Opus 130*, whose demands on the performer have already been noted in Chapter 5, to a close.¹³¹ Dusinberre reveals some of the salient features of the ironic that Egan draws to our attention, ‘mastery’, ‘tools’, ‘specialization’, when he

¹³⁰ In situ this reads: << ... il est l’homme de vues d’ensemble ... ce qu’il voit est une totalité concrète ... >> (Aubenque, 1963: 57).

¹³¹ Beethoven went on to write another ending for this String Quartet, lighter in tone, and which can be (legitimately) substituted. See for example Dusinberre (2016: 227).

describes this fugue by Beethoven, which is a pinnacle of achievement, as music of ‘destabilising energy’ (2016: 206). In other words, it takes judicious, flexible and nuanced control to perform the Fugue well. A teacher who (as earlier in this chapter) successfully navigates significant ‘discomfort’ in learning on behalf of their class (Gardner, 2008) is, similarly, displaying focus and commitment of high quality. The success is born of experience and reflection (‘mastery’, ‘tools’, ‘specialization’). Indeed, to some extent, I can argue that a teacher, displaying this expertise whilst navigating such quandaries in classroom practice, is (as alluded to earlier in this chapter) working within an artistic tradition (after Coldron and Smith, 1999).

What can be discerned in these two cases, the one musical, the other pedagogical, is that both display artistic quality as embodied artwork. They form the distinct possibility of an ‘otherwise’ (after Aubenque, 1963); they are, in no small way, in search of the ‘better’ (Egan, 1986). The performance of a piece of music, of quality, (however broadly defined), is a representation of some truth about the world. The *phronimos*, the person of practical wisdom, is likewise an ontological truth telling us something significant about the world. This significance, this ‘artwork’, is why, at a fundamental level, practical wisdom is essential to the concept of the role model, if the latter is to be truly valuable in the serious purpose of teaching and learning.

Chapter 7

Gift making: Aristotelian virtue and music performance

A gift can be precious. Giving and receiving a gift can be pleasurable. If these statements are true, a gift can, in itself, act as the mark of a pleasurable, sometimes significant, occasion. In a simple world the concept of a gift is a straightforward one. Essentially here a gift is ‘a thing given willingly to someone without payment; a present’.¹³² However if we are to consider Marcel Mauss’ analysis (1970; 2002), there is no such thing as a free gift.¹³³ In other words, the ‘purity’ of gift making does not exist: there is a particular societal framing of the concept of the gift. And within this context a tension is evident, for the gift is both a present and (succinctly described) a method of quasi-bartering.

What, then, if virtue and music performance were to be each viewed through the lens of gift making? In this chapter I begin by considering the key constituents of a gift, including the issue of reciprocity. Then, using a clarified notion of the gift, I consider whether the concept of gift making is helpful in challenging the way in which we may think about (a) music performance and (b) Aristotelian virtue. I then investigate emerging aspects from the notion of the gift, particularly that of pleasure, and consider possible connections. Pleasure is an important feature of Aristotelian virtue and of music performance. By drawing on the notion of gift making, (appropriate) pleasure can be enhanced. I argue that gift making as an expression of pleasure is significant therefore, and contributes towards realising the *telos* understood as eudaimonistic. And I discuss how this contributes towards providing a sensible positioning of virtue in music education to better help teachers and students. I also show that music performance and virtue (conceptualised as virtuous action) can be usefully viewed as gift making in a socially cohesive way. I begin, then, by considering the key constituents of a gift, including the issue of reciprocity.

¹³² Oxford Dictionaries, English. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gift> (last accessed 17 May 2017). A gift is also ‘a natural ability or talent’ and used informally, a gift can be ‘a very easy task or unmissable opportunity’. Here I am using neither of these two definitions when referring to the notion of gift.

¹³³ Unintentionally here I am appropriating the phrase ‘There’s no such thing as a free lunch’. See economist David Smith (2003: 2-3) for a brief overview of the origins of the phrase.

Gifts and reciprocity

The notion of the gift was hugely advanced by the work of Mauss. This is substantiated by Morris, who refers to ‘the study of gift exchange’ as having become a key research area in economic anthropology (1986: 1).¹³⁴ Because Mauss’ study, *The Gift*, is a seminal work and, importantly, is a definitive work on the notion of the gift, I begin by drawing upon his research in this area. There are important and contrasting aspects within his essay to which I will return later in this chapter. It is not however my intention to provide a full and critical account of his anthropological study.

In his essay, Mauss scrutinised the gift in its ‘totality’, both its ‘forms and functions’. By trying to understand the practice of exchange of gifts across a number of communities, (Melanesia, Polynesia, Oceania, North-West America and Canada), Mauss was able to note the significance of particular institutions and customs. Building on this he was also able to draw attention to historical practice, (Ancient Rome, Hindu, Germanic, and Chinese), and to conventions of the current époque, (early 1920s).¹³⁵ It has to be noted though that by its very nature the giving of gifts is ‘an ephemeral phenomenon’ in that it is ‘archaeologically invisible, for most social contexts of prestation produce no archaeological residue’ (Morris, 1986: 2). Nevertheless, because of this newfound understanding of the exchange of gifts as ‘articulation of social order’ (Evans-Pritchard, 1970: ix), it did mean thereafter that ‘gifts’ formed part of the anthropological audit trail.¹³⁶ Specifically, for the purposes of my argument, Mauss’ influential analysis is particularly useful because on a broad level it is able to situate the concept of the gift within the scope of both community and individual, and finds it to be a part of the communication and workings of human life. Thus, I will argue that music performance (which itself is multifaceted) can nestle comfortably within the context of considering the notion of the gift. The analysis by Mauss is also clear that the act of exchanging a gift can be cohesive,

¹³⁴ Douglas notes the sphere of influence in the wake of World War 1 as primarily on archeologists, anthropologists and classicists (1990: xx).

¹³⁵ *The Gift* (2002) is noted on the title page as the following dates: 1923-1924.

¹³⁶ The expectations of a field report were that it would now include an account of all transfers: ‘dues, gifts, fines, inheritances and successions, tributes, fees and payments’ (Douglas, 1990: xvi).

but that the power issuing from this¹³⁷ is in society's hands - including the individual's at any one given time, and can shift.¹³⁸

In his investigation, Mauss is looking specifically into the practice of the fulfilment of contracts and the exchange of goods via the exchange of gifts (1970: 1): a *prestation*. In cultural anthropological terms this is understood as a 'gift, payment, or service that forms part of some traditional function in a society, given or due either to a specific person or to a group'; it is also 'the giving or performance of such a gift or service'.¹³⁹ Its counter balance (which explicitly involves reciprocity) is well explained in the following: 'The necessity felt by some ethnic groups to give something to those who have offered something first. (The potlatch is an example of a counter-prestation.)'¹⁴⁰ Parry usefully sums this up when he describes a *prestation* as a 'hybrid' of 'gifts, loans and pledges' (1986: 458). As Morris notes, the exchange of gifts can be both 'an integrative and competitive mechanism' (1986: 12).¹⁴¹ A key aspect of the *prestation*, of course, is that of its obligatory nature. This can lead to problems: 'Denying these obligations denies the existence of a social relationship with the other party, and hence violates public expectation and private belief' (Carrier, 1991: 123). Given these societal constraints or norms, its obligatory nature also raises the question of the degree of (group and individual) freedom. Clearly, then, Mauss' use of the term 'gift' is different to our everyday use of the term. With this caveat in mind, Mauss' analysis has nonetheless much to reveal about the gift.

A further way in which to look at this network of social relationships is to consider the gift in relation to the notion of reciprocity. If reciprocity is 'the

¹³⁷ Morris (1986) for example writes the following: 'Spheres of exchange can act as a very powerful means of exercising social control' (1986: 8).

¹³⁸ In discussing the potlatch, a particular type of 'gift-exchange' (1970: 33) - Mauss refers to things exchanged as holding within themselves 'a certain power'. This power 'forces' the community to circulate, give away and repay these things (1970: 41).

¹³⁹ Oxford Dictionaries, English, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/prestation> (last accessed 20 May 2017).

¹⁴⁰ The original is as follows: << Nécessité éprouvée par certaines ethnies de rendre quelque chose à ceux qui ont offert quelque chose en premier. (Le potlatch est un exemple de contre-prestation.) >> Dictionnaire de français Larousse (Larousse French Dictionary). <http://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/contre-prestation/> (last accessed 20 May 2017).

¹⁴¹ This is as evidenced in 10-7 B.C. in ancient Greece (Morris, 1986: 11-12).

practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit'¹⁴² then, arguably, the gift forms a sub-set of reciprocity. Reciprocity infers mutual benefit particularly in the shape of 'privileges granted by one country or organisation to another'.¹⁴³ But the mutuality inherent in reciprocity need not necessarily equate with fairness or what Aristotle refers to as, 'what is just' (*NE* 1132b28-29).¹⁴⁴ But having noted different types of justice (*NE* Book 5), Aristotle considers one aspect of justice as forming reciprocity within economic terms and that without the reciprocal ability to exchange, there can be no form of community (*NE* Book 5, Chapter 5). This, he argues, strikes at the heart of a community - the *polis*.¹⁴⁵

Aristotle's stance reflects the argument that Hasebroek (1933) noted by Morris (1986: 3) makes about the city-state: namely that it is its politics which forms the broad context of economic life.¹⁴⁶ Think here of citizen, outsider, slave. Nonetheless, Aristotle's view is nuanced: there is a difference between commodity and gift. In terms of commodities, their exchange is essentially for serving the city-state. Set apart, there should be 'a traders' agora ... convenient for the reception of goods both by sea and land' (*Politics* 1331b1-3). In contrast, the bestowal of gifts is part of what it is to be a 'magnificent person', that is to say a noble person (*NE* 1122a35). You 'lavish' gifts on others, not yourself (1123a5). This includes being aware of what it is to go beyond the boundaries of magnificence - that is, being 'excessive and vulgar' (1123a20). In *Politics* Aristotle mentions that people (of 'property and wealth' is the inference) 'are inclined to rush into one of two extremes, some into meanness, others into luxury' (1326b36-37). Another way of expressing this, although at a more general

¹⁴² Oxford Dictionaries, English <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/reciprocity> (last accessed 17 May 2017).

¹⁴³ Oxford Dictionaries, English <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/reciprocity> (last accessed 17 May 2017).

¹⁴⁴ To some extent this sense of implicit injustice seeps out from within the original meaning of the word *antipeponthos* ('reciprocity'). The term is derived from 'the verb meaning "to suffer in turn"' and can 'have the sense of "eye for an eye"', (Bartlett and Collins, 2011: 99, Note 19).

¹⁴⁵ 'For there is no community if there is no exchange, or exchange if there is no equality, or equality if there is no commensurability' (*NE* 1133b18-19).

¹⁴⁶ Hasebroek puts this case strongly. He writes: 'The State interfered not only in commerce, but in the whole economic life of the city' (1933: 151). For his discussion on Aristotle and economics, see in particular 179-182.

level, is that of being aware of ‘unlimited’ desires and the dangers of ‘gratifying’ these (1258a2-3).

So, having noted that reciprocity infers a ‘mutual benefit’, benefit itself can be argued as forming part of what might be described as a gift. A gift may bring with it some mutually understood benefit (at whatever level this may be). In such cases there are, as Mauss notes, obligations in the custom of gift making: giving, receiving and, sometimes, repaying with interest (1970: 37-41). And Aristotle is aware of gifts as part of a well-judged social act. The latter is also in effect, an obligation to oneself: to err towards the mean.

The gift itself can also be viewed as inalienable or alienable. As the former a particular gift is, to some extent at least, something that is linked with a particular person (Mauss, 2012: 19). In contrast, severed as it were from the individual, a gift can instead be viewed otherwise: as political, economic, social and moral. This is the case in the ancient Greece of 8-6 B.C. (Morris, 1986: Note 2, page 13).

The contrasting aspects of inalienability and alienability thread through in Mauss’ analysis. Of significance here is that of the overlay with the ‘aesthetic’ and how this, I argue, affects whether something can be considered inalienable or not, or in fact be both. Effectively an analysis of a number of anthropological studies into a synthesised whole, Mauss’ essay deals with the ‘*total* social phenomena’ [italics as in original] (Mauss, 1970: 1). The focus is on that of the ‘wholes’ (77), that is to say, ‘systems in their entirety’ (77). But the phenomena referred to in Mauss’ essay include the ‘legal, economic, religious, aesthetic, morphological’ (1970: 76). Although for the purposes of the essay the aesthetic remains ‘unstudied’ (77), the aesthetic within institutions involved in the exchange of gifts it is described in strong terms.

... the dances performed, the songs and shows, the dramatic representations given between camps or partners, the objects made, used, decorated, polished, amassed and transmitted with affection¹⁴⁷, received with joy, given away in triumph, the feasts in which everyone participates - all these, the food, objects, services, are the source of aesthetic emotions¹⁴⁸ as well as emotions aroused by interest. (77)

In the original version of this passage, there is also reference made to 'respect': << ... nourriture, objets et services, même le << respect >>' (2002: 103). In this acknowledgement of the aesthetic aspect of the exchange of gifts is a tacit acknowledgement of the role of 'making'. There is a 'personal' shaping to the occasion. If this is recognised (and lauded, which it is from Mauss' perspective), inalienability can be said to form part of the gift. Here the 'personal' and the 'impersonal' are interwoven: 'Thus, objects exist in two distinct spheres that may overlap in particular cases' (Carrier, 1991: 132). The two spheres are firstly the personal, in effect, the meaningful as in cultural and human relationships, and secondly the impersonal, in effect, commodity (132-133).

Mauss also expressly makes the point that 'It is our good fortune that all is not yet couched in terms of purchase and sale' (1970: 63). He goes on to emphasise this by noting in his essay: 'Things have values which are emotional as well as material; indeed in some cases the values are entirely emotional' (63). Ignoring the type of cost that this may incur, (for example Mauss cites courtesy, being hospitable beyond one's means), the emotional is important in that it may serve as an impetus to respond to the emotion so as to shape a response. Although I can dispute the precise form this might take, (in this case, the focus is, necessarily, on drawing), Marr puts this well when he describes what appears to be a fundamental need: 'But feeling needs to be put into shape, and that's why we all draw' (2013: 142). Or cook, or drive a vintage car for a friend's daughter's wedding. Using the emotion rationally offers us the opportunity to respond appropriately, sometimes in the form of gift making.

¹⁴⁷ In the original the term used is << avec amour >> 'with love', here translated as 'with affection' (Mauss, 2002: 102).

¹⁴⁸ Also, << d'émotions de l'ordre du moral >> ('emotions of the moral kind') is included in the original before those 'aroused by interest' (Mauss, 2002: 103).

Drawing upon the discussion thus far, and while acknowledging the gift as a contested notion, as exemplified particularly by Mauss, I now present the working parameters for the concept of the gift. Broadly speaking, a gift is given - otherwise logically it cannot be referred to as a gift. This giving may be part of an exchange process: the 'exchanging of gifts', be it in the form of prestations or other exchange (Mauss). Key to this is this exchange framed in societal terms, and is an important aspect of Mauss' work. I return to the significance of this social act later in the discussion. Having explored the notion of the gift, primarily through 'gift giving' or 'exchange of gifts' including all its contestations and clarifications, I emphasise the aesthetic (broadly speaking) and the emotional via the notion of making. I will use the following constructed term: 'gift making'. I use this term because this encapsulates the process, the making, and the outcome, in the form of a gift, whether as music performance or the outcome of virtuous action or both. This personal involvement is key if this lens is to be useful.

Music performance as gift making

With these views in mind, I turn now to music performance and Aristotelian virtue, and argue the case for gift making within these. I argue that the concept of gift making is helpful in challenging the way in which we may think about (a) music performance and (b) Aristotelian virtue, using this clarified notion of the gift.

In the closing pages of Chapter 4 I posited that music performance could be legitimately constructed within a framework that was supportive of personalism. This particular account of music performance allows for the human effort involved and the individual's music performance to be recognised, albeit within a particular setting. It also allows for particular expectations, (for example the level of skills being commensurate with the piece of music being played). It also draws together (or at least refutes artificial boundaries and impotent roles), the listener, the composer and the performer. In brief, the essence of a music performance is its musical communication.

In what ways, then, can the notion of gift making elucidate music performance as personalism? Can music performance as a gift exist? And if so, what form does

the gift making take? Here I set aside the often-heard comment that goes something like this: “‘X’ is amazingly gifted at singing - they’re a natural”. A person may have a natural ability or ‘gift’, a propensity for this type of artistic work, but this is not enough. The ‘gift’ needs to be honed, including through significant work. Only then will that person be in a position to be called a maker of (musical) gifts. Instead, with the focus on gift making, the following provide examples of a richer account of the notion of ‘gift’. I remember being upset at the early death of a colleague. I do recall quite vividly choosing very carefully a piece to perform and then, without anyone in the room, performing the music for him as a gift. And it was quite difficult to accomplish. Somewhat similarly, the tradition of a New Orleans jazz funeral is a bestowal in response to the effort of a life well lived: it is a gift made by the community to recognise the individual’s contribution (McDonald, 2011).¹⁴⁹ Certainly, the notion of the gift was one of four notable aspects to emerge from a project about musicians and their creativity and originality, partly in relation to their preparation for the stage. The research project, ‘Music in the making’, identified these aspects as key: ‘freedom, flexibility, a sense of “being in the moment”, and a commitment to “giving” the music to an audience’ (Rink, 2013: 1). So I do take the view that there is evidence that music performance can be presented as gift making.

This particular ‘giving’ can be called, I argue, gift making: there is a commitment to offering the music. And while ‘giving’ is its bedrock, and people in all kinds of working environments ‘give’, for example, the surgeon the gift of life, music performance can also be partly constructed as gift making.

(Remember that Mauss in his work identified the overlapping of various phenomena in gift exchange, including that of economics and aesthetics. One aspect need not preclude another therefore.) And, while the ‘giving’ is part of the process of internalising the music to better perform it (whether during practice sessions or on the stage), Rink is clear that the commitment is that of giving to an audience. Furthermore, the level of commitment, via giving, is still the case, ‘even if that audience exists only in their imagination while they are rehearsing, or even just thinking about performing’ (2013: 1).

¹⁴⁹ ‘The Mighty Mississippi’ with Trevor McDonald (a series of three programmes) ITV 1 Programme 1 10 April 2011; eight minutes into the programme. The music is described by McDonald as ‘cutting the body loose from its earthly bonds’, and he describes a jazz funeral as ‘a marvellous way to celebrate the end of a highly regarded life’.

Furthermore, when ‘playing to, or imagining, an audience’ - that is ‘giving’ the music and the performance - this was when the participants in the project ‘were at their most creative’ (3). This giving (or gifting) was seen to be a factor in the development of ‘creative individuality’ beyond what the musician had already achieved (1). We can see this ‘giving’ as an outcome of the driving force of (creative) vitality evident in personalism that I discussed previously. This gifting to the imagined audience may also help working through issues, (for example, technical and stylistic), as it provides another way of considering these. Perhaps too, there is some kind of imaginary audience feedback? There is also a possibility that this may help with the type of ‘disturbance’ I discussed in Chapter 6. After all, an audience may provide another motivating factor: the wish to share the music at its best. When the choir in Chapter 1 unexpectedly sang the descant, there was present this wonderful driving force. The young singers were desperate to enjoy the high-wire act of the descant - and to share it. Giving to an audience, even one that lies within the imagination, also implies effort. In sum, giving the music and the performance is in effect an example of people at their most creative. It is also, in some sense of the phrase, gift making.

But can a performance really be deemed a performance if no ‘real’ audience is actually present? Partly this may depend on how I view the function of the music performance. Even if a piece of music is performed to provide a dissimilar function to that of its original intention, can this still be considered a performance? Several centuries have gone by and J.S. Bach’s sacred music is often performed outside of the function it was originally intended for (which was for example, weekly church services). A listener would still understand the performance in the 21st Century to be no less a performance of that particular work. However, Goodman argues that while a performance without an audience can be said to take place, the original function of the music will not be achieved (1984: 142-43). Nonetheless, to use Sontag’s point but in a different context, we can still see ‘the thing’ (1966: 14).¹⁵⁰ As explored in Chapter 4, Goehr would argue further: there is no such thing as a music piece that is ‘a fixed creation’ (1992: 185). Somewhat in contrast, I argued that the personalism account does

¹⁵⁰ In Chapter 4 I referred to Sontag’s point that the task ‘is to cut back content so that we can see the thing at all’ (1966: 14).

allow for the performance of a piece of music in a multiplicity of contexts, including the occasion or function, while conceding that this may not be exclusively the case.

The answer to these questions about ‘audience’ may also depend on what construction of an audience I have in mind, (for example, whether an audience at a rock concert, an imagined audience, or someone departed from this life). In the traditional sense, an audience is bodily present. But there are plenty more diffuse settings that can be used for reaching an audience, whether via the internet or recordings for example. Here the setting or occasion is established in other (premeditated) ways to that of the composer or singer-songwriter’s initial conception. In effect, there are many acoustical worlds. It is possible, then, for an imagined audience to play its part – whether, and this is the important point, it ever gathers to listen (by implication, attentively) or not. But to push the point in a slightly different way, it is perfectly possible to argue that reciprocity and mutual benefits (as examined earlier) cannot exist within the contexts of the imaginary audience or music performer as (sole) audience, thus throwing doubt here on the presence of respectful exchange. But, within this gift making there does remain a commitment to the difficulty of accomplishing the task and presenting work of quality, and both these audiences remain part of this. To that extent at least, these particular audiences can also be said to receive and ‘give back’.

Much in the same way as in the research project, ‘Music in the making’, Davies offers the idea that a significant amount of what constitutes preparation for performance can be called ‘performing’ (2011: 177). The reasoning he gives for this throws some light on why the musicians in the project may have found the imaginary audience so fecund to their practice. Davies writes: ‘For [this preparation] is consciously guided by expectations about the responses of an intended audience’ (177). However, he argues that it is only during the performance itself that we would call this ‘*giving a performance*’ [italics as in the original] (177). Nonetheless, this does not preclude the possibility of performing ‘*for oneself*’ [italics as in the original] (177). To reframe this, the performer is the listener-audience. And, indeed, there are some students I have

worked with for whom this is the *raison d'être* for their learning to play an instrument.

Hence, I argue that music performance as gift making can take place on a number of levels. This gift making is as evident in practice as it is in performance ('on stage', however conceived). It may be offered to audiences who exist in different ways, be this face-to-face, diffuse, imaginary or self. The commitment is to the music, and to others, and to self. This is particularly significant if I conceptualise music performance within the framework of personalism. The individual is, through their musicianship, offering something of themselves - some of which the audience may identify with.

In drawing this section to a close, while I have argued that music performances may be constructed as gift making, clearly not all music performances might be deemed to be gifts. It would be difficult, although not impossible, to take the view for example that a music performance that is unintelligible to the listener can be framed as a gift. It took me for example considerable adjustment to react to (and dance to) techno music. This would have been the case even if this music had been intended as a gift, for example for our wedding reception. The music schema for techno was, initially at least, out of my frame of reference or schema and thus uncomfortable and unattractive. Levitin (2006: 234) refers to schemas as 'inform[ing] our cognitive models and expectations'. This explains, partially at least, why we might empathise with others who also find themselves 'at sea': whether for example 'outraged' (*Rite of Spring*¹⁵¹) or 'baffled' (the *Ninth Symphony*, the *Choral*¹⁵²). Whether 'my world', that is the world recognisable to me and, in effect, harbouring my sense of 'safety', will adjust, may be dependent on a number of factors. How far are my musical worlds from this one? Do I try to understand this music? For, as noted in Chapter 4, what is 'strange' can become 'familiar' (Sacks, 2007). Essentially, our schema becomes reworked and can adjust. Without this possibility teachers would not be able to educate in the full sense of the word. There is an argument to be had, then,

¹⁵¹ Benjamin (2013) analyses the initial reactions to the ballet and, in musical terms, its subsequent influence.

¹⁵² Sachs (2010: 25) describes the first audience at the first performance of Beethoven's work as, 'no doubt thoroughly flummoxed'.

that a music performance such as the above can, ultimately, be recognised and accepted by the recipient listener as a gift (assuming that was the intention).

But turning now to what can be considered as more problematic, there are instances where the music is unexpected or is not necessarily wanted; for example in the form of flashmobs, whether advertising via a live extract in a shopping centre for an upcoming performance of for example the *Messiah* or expressing a critical stance towards society, for example, flamenco performed as social resistance in a bank.¹⁵³ It is difficult to argue the case for these music performances as being presented as gifts; in societal terms they are being pressed on the audience in the sense of somewhat limited freedom or coercion. More importantly still, what about music performances whose nature means that my 'safety' is affected, often more insidiously? I am not thinking here of music performances that call upon the resources of adaptive schema; rather of music that lends weight to propaganda, (jingoistic or inflammatory song for example), or misuses the performer (perhaps through excessive or dangerous practice) or pulls one into a music making world that propagates violence (often via lyrics). Can these be deemed gifts even if that is the performer's intention?

Aristotle argues that music can mould the character (as discussed in Chapter 3). It is as well to remember this. Music performances, including their contexts and societal expectations, that do not look as if they will contribute to this appropriate moulding, cannot be argued as a gift, not in its fullest sense: that is as contributing to eudaimonistic well-being. The latter examples can be argued as 'excessive' and not well judged, although their insidious nature can be argued as varying in degree of impact. Therefore, whether the process is predicated on gift making or not, music performances such as these are not only of an excessive nature and poorly judged effort and social communication but can impact on our character, intellectually and morally. In these cases, we can easily be led to make poor judgements ourselves, literally through entertaining such thoughts through 'attractive' presentation. If we are young and immature, music performances such as these may be considered even less of a gift in terms

¹⁵³ I attended a lecture in which Machin-Autenrieth (2015) discussed the use of flamenco performance to showcase political resistance.

of learning to make good judgements. They can verge on what we might call the dangerous.

Aristotelian virtue as gift making

I now turn to consider whether the concept of gift making is helpful in opening out the way we may think about Aristotelian virtue, using this clarified notion of the gift. In Chapter 2 I noted the dynamic nature of Aristotelian virtue, and this important aspect has continued to permeate subsequent discussions. Aristotle is concerned with appropriate action, intellectual and characterful (moral). Such action is about the gradual and reasoned development of virtue within an individual's life. This is not some separate aspect of life. Aristotle argues that this (sustained action) is about doing well in order to bring about something good (NE 1106a16-17). Conceptualised in this way, it is problematic to appreciate virtue as a gift bestowed as Adams does. Virtue is used to denote 'good moral character' or 'a good trait of character', and is not always discussed in the Aristotelian sense, (Adams, 2006: 1). Adams argues that virtue is mostly comprised of a gift, although he agrees that it is not gained without effort. He describes it thus: '... a gift of nature or of grace, or both, ...' (165). In other words, there is no equal distribution, be it inherent disposition, social, or any other factor. Here is 'moral luck' (166), bad or good. One of the problems however with Adams' argument is that if the concept of virtue is premised on this somewhat passive notion (of gift) then 'it should also be right to be *grateful* for it' [italics as in the original] (168).¹⁵⁴ This, naturally enough, then leads to the identification of the virtues of gratitude and humility within his account (169), perhaps not what can be considered the most dynamic of virtues.

In contrast, although Aristotle is dealing with those who are sensitive to the development of virtue, (noble young men, by inference well bred), he situates his discussions within that of the dynamic terrain of 'human affairs'. Like Aristotle, I understand virtue to be an active proposition: it requires virtuous action. It is not bestowed. If this is the case, it is important that teachers work with their students, recognising the 'internal readiness' for progress (Sherman, 1989: 159) and by providing appropriate alimentation (Egan, 1986: 107-108). The

¹⁵⁴ If we view this gratitude as a response to a quasi-charitable act, this compounds the passivity. Both Douglas (1990) and Carrier (1991) discuss some of the issues regarding for example 'charity' vis-à-vis the bestowal of gifts.

student is educated (both in character and in intellect) over a lifetime towards the *telos*, (*eudaimonia*). Some may develop practical wisdom, (perhaps to a lesser or greater degree), as they make their way through life. A teacher, a parent or a friend, will support the individual towards achieving this goal, and gift, of ‘happiness’. Ultimately however, the only person who can make this gift is the individual concerned. In this respect at least, the notion of Aristotelian virtue as gift making is helpful. It offers a structuring device at both a societal and individual level. Here I refer to gift making not as a gift ‘lavished’ (*NE* 1123a5), but slow burning and integral to the individual’s *eudaimonia*. Again, a little like with the aesthetic (Mauss, 1970), there is a ‘personal’ shaping. But the time this takes is over a lifetime and it provides, (after Csikszentmihalyi, 2008: 213), some of life’s ‘connecting order’. Gift making can ‘enact’ its end within itself (after Crawford, 2009: 193¹⁵⁵) time and time again. Virtue conceptualised thus is not a passive gifted agent.

Gift making as making meaning

Having proposed that both the process and outcome in gift making is important, whether artistic or virtuous action or both, I suggested that personal involvement is crucial if this lens is to be useful. It is clear that both virtuous action and music performance can be creative in that they respond to, and shape, materials. This assumes, of course, that the individual is acting from a place of freedom, not manipulation and that the individual is acting from appropriate motivation. If an individual has some freedom and therefore some degree of power, then it seems that being in a position to shape and fashion can help us make sense of our ‘reality’.¹⁵⁶

Although understood as an external good (for example a wonderful concert, a skilful professional intervention), it is imperative to note that gift making is also an internal good. The ‘giving’ that occurred during the research project ‘Music in the making’, enabled musicians to further their internal aptitude for music

¹⁵⁵ I have taken this after Crawford (2009: 193). In discussing activities that are carried out in a wholehearted fashion, Crawford writes that ‘They contain their end within themselves; they *enact* that end, in “real time,” as we now say’. [Italics as in original.]

¹⁵⁶ As already noted, the power may, of course, shift, as for example when an agent works at the beginning of a musician’s career to promote stardom and when this fame does or does not materialise.

performance. Giving opened out their music making creatively. This enabled the musicians to overcome a particular barrier, (in this particular case respecting both the score and the composer), in an appropriate way (Rink, 2013: 1). The transaction of giving can ‘express’, ‘create’ and ‘recreate’ over time (Carrier, 1991: 131 and 133) within the web of ‘people, objects, and social relations’ as identified by Mauss (Carrier, 1991: 133). Gift making (understood as propelled personally), then, may be conceptualised as containing within itself significant meaning.

In the novel, *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold, there is a moment that catches and distils like gossamer the main threads of this chapter’s discussion: that of the possibility of gift making as voiced through music performance and virtuous action, cohesive but in this particular case, both separately identifiable. Here, the gift involved is beyond ‘ritual and etiquette’ (Mauss, 1970: 70¹⁵⁷) or a means whereby to control others (73). The precious is of a simple homespun but hugely significant moment. It marks the occasion in which a father reemerges into the world around him. He finds, somehow, the will to act.

In this pivotal passage (Sebold, 2002: 210), the main protagonist, Susie, watches from heaven her loved ones on earth. In response to the request from her father, their neighbour, Stan O’Dwyer, sings for the murdered daughter; and for those involved in the circle of love for this child; and for himself.

“Stan,” he said, “Susie used to stand at the front window during the summer and listen to you singing in your yard. She loved it. Will you sing for us?”

And in the kind of grace that is granted, but rarely, and not when you wish it most - to save a loved one from dying - Mr. O’Dwyer wobbled only a moment on his first note, then sang loud and clear and fine.

Everyone joined in.

¹⁵⁷ In the original the phrase used is << de rites et de droits >>, ‘rituals and rights’ Mauss (2002: 96).

How we receive the gift that is the music performance or the virtuous action, or combined, as in Stan O'Dwyer's courageous singing, may, of course, differ. Sontag argues that 'The complex kind of willing¹⁵⁸ that is embodied, and communicated, in a work of art both abolishes the world and encounters it in an extraordinary intense and specialised way' (1966: 30). Described like this, it brings a further extraordinary sense of security (illusionary or not) about this particular moment in the story. There is reasoning behind this possibility of art providing a certain kind of direct, and comforting, simplicity. To partly reiterate the opening of this chapter, a gift may be part of a simple world, a world in which for some moments the focus is on essential meaning. There is a beauty in simplicity and in hard-won pleasure.

Building, then, on the opening of this chapter, where I noted that pleasure forms an aspect of our understanding of the notion of the gift, I argue that appropriate pleasure forms an important feature. If we develop in our students and ourselves sensibility to taking the right steps, the hope is that we may learn to take pleasure in this. Instead of struggle, it is, as demonstrated in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, a natural thing for pleasure to emerge. To paraphrase Aristotle, the activity is only really complete when pleasure accompanies it (*NE* 1175a16). Understanding that some aspects may be construed as gift making may help to make this learning more palatable. This may not be altruistic, but seeing pleasure on people's faces when young students share their music making with a group of for example older people can communicate to students how amazing it is to take pleasure in right things. We can learn that we develop the 'otherwise'. If we are to accept (after Aristotle) the teleological premise that the purpose of human action is eudaimonistic: that is to say, at the heart of action is the eudaimonistic 'well being' of human beings, then gift making is one important way of achieving this. It gives a sensible positioning of virtue in music education without artificiality. This moves virtue to real life, as lived - empirically, as Aristotle always thought of it. It is not 'character education' per se. It enables an outcome that can be tangible, attractive and makes sense. It can be supportive of the person, that is to say, of their individual characteristics and abilities, while helping to develop character and intellect. Furthermore, the

¹⁵⁸ Sontag refers to the will as partly comprising 'an attitude toward the world' (1966: 30). See Chapter 6 in this dissertation for a more detailed discussion on the notion of will.

conditions of true gift making may be seen to be virtue led and eudaimonistic. What is normally not construed as a social act of offering a gift, that is, acting virtuously, actually can be. Although this has to be navigated sensitively, and I do not propose that the concept of gift making can be pushed beyond a certain point, I do think the perspective is an optimistic one.

There is possibly a further cause for optimism. As discussed in Chapter 3 (and earlier in this chapter), Aristotle argues that music can contribute to forming us. While we are made cognisant that music may offer amusement and relaxation, music can offer more. Music can inspire, lead us to imitation, and is supportive of learning to judge appropriately. In making such steps, music can be seen to help foster 'right pleasure'. Pleasure is argued as one of the three constituents of leisure - leisure that is understood as intellectual leisured activity. The latter is of such importance that Aristotle considers it the first principle of action. Viewed like this, it becomes possible to entertain the argument that music that is not ostensibly intended in itself to evoke pleasure (and therefore not easily constructed as a gift) can still form 'leisured pleasure'. It can thus be convincingly framed as a gift (if gift making is the intent).

In the following analysis in which I consider whether this argument does have traction, I could draw upon music from many styles; in particular, music for film comes to mind. I focus on two pieces from Western classical music, both influential, (the second for example is used in film and in rock music). Firstly, consider *The Erlking (Erlkönig)* by Franz Schubert (to words by Goethe). The song closes with a cold clasp around the heart. In spite of the reassuring words offered by the father to his son during their journey on horseback, the music savagely comes to a halt: 'In his arms - the boy was dead'. But here in the face of abject horror, the Erlking's sinister victory, we can cultivate our intellect. The voice and piano are in equal but complex partnership. We are drawn to the music through musical craftsmanship, (including the aesthetic and emotive), and should we be so motivated, we may for example, critically analyse how the song works, how it engages empathy (how things that happen to us can shape us), and wonder at how, in such a condensed period, so much is conveyed, and with such depth. There is an aftermath with this song - it stays with us. Here we can see the possibility that music which does not evoke pleasure, can, nonetheless,

contribute to the pleasure that is the enjoyment of the intellect. Secondly, consider the music by Krzysztof Penderecki, *Threnody: To the victims of Hiroshima*. Dedicated to the memory of those who died from the atomic bomb unleashed on Hiroshima (6 August 1945), the sounds, almost noise at times, invoked by Penderecki from the fifty-two stringed instruments, can be terrifying – and we may sense the anguish. The music may influence us, it may affect our behaviour and response (after Aristotle), in that for example we may consider the (historical) event in a different way or think about what it is to innovate musically. For example originally the piece was called *8' 37"* only to be given a new title¹⁵⁹ (in effect, a dedication) after Penderecki heard it performed. The arts can help us to develop discerning judgement (as discussed in Chapter 3). We can take pleasure in this. Here, and seemingly against the odds, this piece can also be viewed pleasurably.

It would seem, then, that music in itself can be pleasurable, although as evidenced by these two pieces it can be both dramatic and chilling and may not always evoke pleasure. Assuming that (a) the music is not considered excessive in the sense of insidious nature involving poor judgement and (b) based on the premise that pleasure is understood as forming leisure of a certain sort, it is possible to argue such pieces to be pleasurable. Ostensibly ‘unpleasant’, the piece of music may, ultimately, be pleasurable, for it can foster pleasure in the development of (leisured) intellect. This is because in our response we (can) involve cognitive action of a certain quality. If music can indeed help to form the character, and all the indications are that it can, what we offer as a gift through music performance matters. In making the link between music and pleasure in this way, this serves to underline the richness of gift making that is music performance or music performance and virtuous action combined. This is indeed cause for optimism.

So, should a gift be free, that is to say, ‘pure’? This is an interesting question. As part of his analysis, Parry suggests that the idea of the purity of a gift is a loaded notion. It is an ‘ideology’ that is ‘elaborated’ by societies with clear labour and commercial sectors and by ‘major world religions’ (1986: 467). For instance Parry refers to the ‘purchase price of salvation’ (468). Self-interest is at

¹⁵⁹ See Thomas (2001: Section 2).

its core (469). In a sense it becomes part of an aggressive stance. Perhaps in terms of the cohesive nature of human beings and their interactions, it was never designed to be so. More important is the integrative nature of its giving and receiving rather than any notion of 'purity'.

But at the heart of all reciprocity be it commercial or non-commercial gift is some kind of 'need'. 'Need', it has to be noted, does not have to be construed negatively. Nussbaum speaks about 'human neediness' and the fact that there is an inherent 'dignity' to this (2006: 356).¹⁶⁰ While, as Mauss has demonstrated, there is a tension evident in the concept of gift, offering and receiving gifts is in a way part of recognising such neediness (broadly speaking) and trying to mediate it, and if it is not too fanciful, celebrating it. Music performance and virtue (conceptualised as virtuous action) can be usefully viewed as gift making in the form of 'human solidarity' (Douglas, 1990: xiii).

Conclusion

I now offer the following summary. The notion of the gift is not neutral - this is clear from Mauss' essay. Having accepted this premise, in this chapter I have identified gift making as a significant expression of pleasure and solidarity, and a key constituent of music education. Pleasure within Aristotelian virtuous action is demonstrated by the individual within the context of the social act of gift making, and the uniqueness of such an act and the inalienability of its product (understood as artistic artefact) once offered are expressed well within gift making.

Gift making is one important way of working towards what I described as 'the heart of action' - that is, the eudaimonistic 'well being' of each individual. There is uniqueness in the act of gift making, and an important inalienability, including of the aesthetic and of the emotion. For we can say, as in the case of Susie's neighbour Stan O'Dwyer: 'Just as the object given as a gift is inalienable, so it is unique' (Carrier, 1991: 126). The hope is that the gift will be received with respect, and not given away. Gift making can within reason, and if sensibly and sensitively developed, promote pleasurable, virtuous and meaningful action

¹⁶⁰ Nussbaum is discussing here an all-encompassing and higher-level need: that of the human cycle of birth and death, interdependent and 'asymmetrical dependency', and (comparatively speaking) independent activity (Nussbaum, 2006: 356).

via music performance. In short, gift making provides optimum conditions for music performing to embody the rich and challenging conditions of Aristotelian virtue.

In the next and final chapter, I conclude by discussing key aspects of my argument, including the importance of gift making relative to and integrative with the other aspects, along with that of courage and practical wisdom.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In this final chapter, I further defend the presence of Aristotelian virtue in music performance education, and consider implications for professional practice and future research.

Throughout this discussion the overarching aim has been to investigate the relevance of Aristotelian virtue to those involved in music performance education. In particular, I have sought to present the underlying principles by which students and teachers should act in response to professional perplexities such as those outlined in my opening chapter.

We could, of course, consider that the teleological construct of eudaimonistic happiness is invalid. However, I have argued within this premise. And I consider that *eudaimonia* is an appropriate construct upon which to consider the human life, with principled action focused towards this goal. While Aristotelian *eudaimonia* is monastic, and the appropriateness of this can be argued, there is a pragmatic argument in its favour. Happiness as the single goal offers a clear and attractive focus. Notwithstanding this type of argument, the key point is that *eudaimonia* as the focal philosophical lens enables a life to be seen in its totality. And furthermore, this is what can give daily life focus. Having reconsidered the concern expressed in Chapter 1 by the young cellist's father, that his daughter should be happy, this, I argue, remains an enviable and correct goal.

Following on from this, I have argued after Aristotle that virtue forms a key constituent of this 'chief goal'. (At the same time I am mindful that virtue is but one aspect, and I have noted this from time to time.) Far from being a passive or docile notion, virtue concerns the active and the dynamic. These attributes in themselves align well with educating the young and energetic developing musician. While music performance does itself form a valuable part of life, and although I have not argued for the presence of music in the curriculum as such, my discussion has analysed its humanising effects, for example its capacity to

reach the emotion or inner life. Nonetheless, in performing music there are demanding considerations at play. These, such as undue pressure, constructing narratives with an interesting ‘take’ and publicity clips, mean that a more short-term view may eclipse the underlying principles of virtuous action towards happiness. (It should be clear that the music performance framework of personalism argued for is not directed towards the kind of instances just cited. The framework may enable these to occur more naturally, but this is not its *raison d’être*.) In short, then, eudaimonistic happiness is not transitory, but substantial, and requires virtue.

I now present emerging themes from my discussion in relation to professional practice and possible future research. I centre these around three broad areas for consideration, cognisant that my research for this dissertation has influenced me on a number of different planes, philosophically, professionally, personally.

Areas for consideration

First, I distil the broad implications from my argument of what it means to teach music performance.

Teaching well requires time and experience and within this is demanding of space for reflection and considered action. This has been demonstrated throughout my argument, and notably in Chapters 5 and 6. As music teachers we should understand what we are doing through the key notion of virtue as part of a eudaimonistic life. In short, virtue enables the function of a human being to express itself and to flourish. In Chapter 2 I referred to this as ‘responsiveness with intent’.

I have discussed the importance that Aristotle gives to developing virtue, moral and of the intellect, and that appropriate habituation is key. Nonetheless, I have chosen not to dwell on for example the approach towards regular music practising. However, it is clear that I consider habituation in all spheres, characterful and intellectual; it is important for habituation provides the tilling of the soil for growth. Thus virtue involves ‘developmental change’ (Chapter 2). The quality of this action, which leads to change, is important. And by implication, effort is required. To make good use of effort, appropriate skills are

required. Skills, be these virtuous or underscored by virtuous action, are of fundamental importance. But again, and as argued in Chapter 6 in my interpretation of the case study by Silverman (2008), these need to be directed and supported with care, including through appropriate habituation (that of the student and of the teacher). Furthermore, the performer's vitality is integral to the music making that occurs in our lives. It follows from this therefore, that the development of skills needs to be judged carefully. The action within a skill is 'of a certain kind' (Chapter 2), including right habituation.

As Aristotle also makes clear, emotion forms part of what it is to be a rational and thoughtful human being. Young performers are fortunate that music encapsulates the expression of emotion. (I consider this so because this gives students particular experience of an important aspect of life, as argued in Chapter 5.) With appropriate support and recognition within the curriculum, students can learn expressivity. There are instances, particularly in Chapters 5 and 6, which make plain that emotion within music, and the very emotion involved in learning itself, (for example in the need for requisite alimentation, or in learning disturbance), calls for careful nurturing, including of appropriate virtues, for example, courage.

Integral to that of being a musician is, of course, making music. But it is not with the simplistic panacea: 'music should be fun'. Yes, this too at times, but the pleasure being sought at root is more subtle than this. I think it is important that teachers resist the urge to make all fun. Nonetheless, pleasure should not be viewed as antagonistic to our 'happiness': appropriate 'pleasure' is at its habituated heart. Gift making can, I have argued in Chapter 7, capture some of this nuanced pleasure. Furthermore, gift making can represent the 'peak' of action that is Aristotelian virtue. As discussed in Chapter 2, achieving the 'peak' of excellence is of consequence to a music performer. Of course, virtuous action, be it moral or intellectual or a combination, can take place in multitudinous ways. But gift making can position virtue as pleasurable action that is appropriately discernible. It can capture both the acquisition of pleasure through appropriate virtuous action and the pleasure which forms the essence of a gift. I now understand more fully the impetus behind when the choir joyfully broke into embellishing the Christmas carol. And as a consequence I have

identified a constructive way in which action of the philosophical and practical sort can be of immediate benefit in music performance.

Throughout the discussion, I have captured the notion that the context of music performance has underlying and overlapping demands, whether public, virtuosic or other. For teachers, then, I have sought to demonstrate the virtuous disposition serves dynamically in response to these demands to ensure a healthy developing life that can be responsive to the future.

Second, I consider the implications for the role of the teacher.

To reiterate, the changes engendered by the development of virtues, (moral and intellectual), their habituation and the skills involved, lead to development and, therefore, change. Part of a teacher's work in response to these changes involves gradually accrued experience in making 'considered judgements' (Chapter 3) to bring about the right action. This is particularly true of the complicated scenarios that can emerge, sometimes rapidly. As part of the landscape of change, courage may for example be required. As teachers we need to understand that this may be the case and, further, that it may not always be immediately evident. A disturbance in learning for example may, as noted, require intellectual courage (Egan, 1986). Reframing understanding, partly through suitably accessing alimentation, may be disorientating, and the student may need to be helped to step away from fear. In Chapter 1 we noted that the violinist had to persist with her rethinking of the (given) interpretation. There was throughout this a tension between being awarded high marks, or, if a different interpretative route was taken, lower marks. In the face of this, the student demonstrated courage (as, indeed, did her teacher).

Furthermore, as human beings who respond to music, we tend to expect those involved in music to push at the boundaries of what they do, as did for example Arixtozenus and Beethoven, and hence, redefine to some extent who they are. Here I am not suggesting that this is what young performers should necessarily be doing (although some will), but that careful nurturing towards the longer-term possibility of this occurring should be taking place. Part of this nurturing may feature in the form of the music making that teachers themselves do and

share. However, although teachers cannot expect this pushing of artistic boundaries from the ‘unexperienced’, the characteristics of moral and intellectual virtues can serve to stabilise when, and if, this happens. (This will partly depend of course on the musical tradition.) In addition, what this aspect does is illuminate the understanding implicit within the music performance model of personalism, that is to say, that the human being counts (as argued in Chapter 4). What a music performer does is of significance.

In the light of these critical observations, the role of the teacher is shown to be a particularly demanding one. There is the steadying notion of habituation of both character and intellect but with these punctuated by disturbance in learning and the requirement for courage. In identifying the latter two as ‘structural’ moments, I revisit these demanding aspects in relation to, in particular, the concept of the mean.

Finding the mean is, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 5, a ‘critical act’ (Fortenbaugh, 2002: 73) and is difficult to achieve. Aristotle was vigilant for example about the level to which skills in the domain of music should be taken (as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4). This is as true of the professional as it is of the student. Whatever the realm of action, Aristotle is very aware of the fallout from excess, be it in the form of beauty, wealth or other.¹⁶¹ Hence, we can understand Aristotle’s concern for a mean of behaviour in approach to life in all its domains.

For if what was said in the *Ethics* is true, that the happy life is the life according to excellence lived without impediment and that excellence is a mean, then the life which is in a mean, and in a mean attainable by everyone, must be the best. (*Politics* 1295a35-39)

At the same time however, Aristotle is also aware of the paradoxical nature of the concept of the mean, for the mean represents action as its ‘best’: ‘it is’, as he says, ‘an extreme’ (*NE* 1107a7-8). However, as Aristotle is at pains to present throughout *Nicomachean Ethics*, the mean demonstrates the possibility of human

¹⁶¹ This is exposed in *Politics* Book 4, Chapter 2 in which Aristotle gives a trenchant account of excess. He also seems to understand the power that can emerge from excess, notably the misuse of power, as in tyranny in its various forms for example.

achievement at its best. Balancing this in the pursuit of musical excellence is challenging, as demonstrated in Chapter 6. I think back for example to the excessive notation of Haimovsky's piano scores by his teacher. And in Chapter 6 I also presented the notion of 'concurrent extremity' and the complex demands this can make.

I also argue (after Aristotle) that understanding and being able to apply the mean in professional life is the hallmark of the person who is characterised by practical wisdom. To do so is not a straightforward matter, as analysed in Chapter 6. I consider that the music teacher faces particular challenges in this respect. On the one hand, the onus is on the teacher to provide learning opportunities for musical coexistence, (for example discipline and passion), and on the other, needs to retain the 'coolness' that is practical wisdom. Disturbance in learning further disturbs the equilibrium that exists. In addition, and as discussed, teachers also need to have reached the 'ironic' stage to be confident in their recognition and appraisal of the 'general' and the 'particular' (Egan, 1986), both hallmarks of the person of practical wisdom.

Crucially, then, becoming assured as a young musician requires a teaching profession which understands the longer-term implications of the short-term and which bears in mind the demands of the characteristics that are imbued in an Aristotelian flourishing life. This leads us, then, to a consideration of the new teacher supported in increasingly demonstrating the traits of practical wisdom.

Third, I consider the analysis in the light of the teacher at the beginning of their teaching career.

It is clear in my discussion that teaching is not simply about playing a key role in generating top-flight results and the winning of music competitions (although both have their place), but, more importantly, about helping to develop independent thinkers, and by implication, doers. Developing practical wisdom, partly because of its integrative nature and partly because it envelops the 'unknown', is key here. Practical wisdom is challenging, and Aristotle certainly acknowledges this. It calls upon the teacher to deliberate, judge and take

informed and appropriate action, and to do this within demanding contexts or contexts that become, unexpectedly, demanding.

As discussed in Chapter 6, Aristotle understood the gradations within professional life. He describes these as the ‘ordinary, the ‘master’ and, finally, one who is ‘educated in the art’ (*Politics* 1282a3-5). In the face of challenges, including the very process of beginning to identify oneself as a teacher, it is crucial that there is space within which to be receptive to actions which are those of the practically wise. In the same way that students may perceive the new teacher as a role model, it is imperative that this teacher has role models to whom he or she may turn. We also saw how the clinician reinforced the notion of dual learning: both from the clients and from colleagues (O’Hara, 2016). Practical wisdom is crucial to the function that is the teacher. Gradually becoming a *phronimos* helps to make sense of the ‘flotsam and jetsam’ of daily teaching life; it is, as argued in Chapter 6, ‘architectonic’ (*NE* 1141b23 and 26). Crucially however, a person of practical wisdom is a person of ‘stature’ in the full sense of the word. It is imperative therefore that as significant individuals in people’s lives, teachers derive their impact from this standing. Without this, I argue that we impoverish young students.

Three underlying principles for professional practice and further implications

In Chapter 3, I noted that Aristotle provides us with sanguine and summative advice: ‘Thus it is clear that education should be based upon three principles - the mean, the possible, the becoming [the appropriate], these three’ (*Politics* 1342b31-33). These three principles or qualities are supportive of an eudaimonistic life, that is to say, a life well lived over a lifetime. It is evident from my discussion that the mean is of particular concern to the music performer. But within the ‘mean’, I argue, lies all that is ‘possible’ and ‘becoming’.

In terms of the ‘possible’, it is likely that we can push to some extent only material, form and function as they move towards their inherent *telos* (as discussed in Chapter 2). Here are resources at our disposal, finite, but infinite in their pushing of boundaries. They can be considered infinite because as human beings we are responsive; that is to say, we fashion proactively the materials

(including ourselves) at our disposal. But we also work within what is ‘possible’ and we judge what is ‘becoming’. Musicians are a particularly good example of this. This is why I find it woeful, as well as a relinquishment of responsibility, to find the student in Chapter 1 at a loss as to how to respond intelligently to the listening paper. The ‘possible’, and therefore the ‘appropriate’, did not materialise through teaching and learning, even to a limited extent.

In addition, then, to music providing a rich context within which seemingly opposing elements can coalesce, practical wisdom in itself is the epitome of a balanced approach. Both music performance and practical wisdom can be said to be concerned with the three underlying principles for professional practice.

Having argued that the mean can encapsulate the possible and becoming, I now pause to further consider my argument of mean as concurrent extremity (Chapter 6), before proceeding to make some proposals. The arguments presented thus far have implications for learning and teaching in music performance education in general. The presence of concurrent extremity within music, while it may be of interest to teachers of music performance at all levels, has particular implications for teachers in higher education. There are, I argue, three main reasons for this.

Firstly, as increasingly skilled music making at a high level is expected from the higher education student and because the layering of extremes of excellence is quintessential to skilled music making, the mean as concurrent extremity needs to be nurtured and enabled (as we saw in the case of Rubinstein reflecting on his career). Secondly, with growing maturity and experience, the possibility of the mean being achieved in one’s actions can (under optimum conditions, including right habituation) become increasingly achievable. Thirdly, the implications for teachers in higher education are particularly striking if personalism is understood as imbuing music performance: their students are likely to be on the cusp of, if not already immersed in, professional or semi-professional performing life. Learning to deal with the multifaceted mean is a complicated (and enriching) aspect of personalism at this stage. The context is, of course, the elements that are particularly accentuated in, or integral to, music performance. To recapitulate: there is the presence of the audience; of the

stage; the drawing upon and the drawing out of expressivity, including dealing with its aftermath; and the possibility of gift making. There is too the integration of the practical, theoretical, intellectual, sometimes culminating in the virtuosic, but of music always to be communicated. Students are learning and they are trying to gain performance experience, that is to say, to put the learning into a kind of contextual practice - and gain some recognition. Both the musical and the human character are therefore at stake.

With these points in mind, it is important, then, to consider how best to safeguard the effort of the undergraduate or postgraduate music performer. In Chapter 6 for example I noted the presence of burnout in response to pressure. Without appropriate guidance from higher education teachers it is hard to envisage music bringing continued pleasure to the increasingly skilled performer precisely because concurrency of means, (for example, passion, discipline), can be de-stabilising. In effect, bringing 'contradictory unity' (Chapter 6) to what one does requires judgement, self-awareness and reflection, and students in higher education need a safe space in which to experiment. It is this forging of 'mutual coexistence' (Chapter 6), of the seemingly disparate, which has such important implications for teachers working in this sector. For in turn, the mean, encapsulating the possible and becoming and conceived as the overlapping of excellences, nestles within the (argued) need for sustained well-being. This, as previously discussed, may include demands on courage, sometimes in relation to learning disturbance, of the performer - who on stage as a skilled or consummate performer may become a role model. In other words, the work here that teachers in higher education do can set students on a professional and eudaimonistic path of health, perhaps even architectonic. Meanwhile, such teachers are also likely to be acting as researchers, consultants and performers, and should, as people of practical wisdom, be mindful of their own needs.

I now advance my account of Aristotelian virtue and its impact on music education performance by offering the following four proposals.

Recommendations and further research

Firstly, I propose that curriculum writers should be able to discuss important matters such as learning disturbance and underlying concepts such as the development of informed Aristotelian virtue with music teachers. Because music curriculum writing can be variously in-house or carried out by external organisations, access to students varies. Both situations will therefore bring differences in immediacy of response, length of time for reflection and varying sensitivities. Nonetheless, it is critical that the curriculum at each level allows for space in which these important matters can be given time to surface and to play out. This is, I argue, a matter of broadening expectations.

Secondly, I propose that in-depth case studies would be helpful in considering the frequency and normality of events happening which require courage, dealing with learning disturbance and developing practical wisdom, and the need for space for these rich contextual areas to be identified, addressed and where possible, resolved. As a whole, those involved in music education could benefit from further understanding of these underlying matters from an Aristotelian and musical perspective combined. These would also provide useful discussion material for teachers new to the profession. This is, I argue, a matter of increasing depth of understanding.

Thirdly, and this follows on closely from the first and second proposals, I propose that students should be able to reflect on the music curriculum, the assessment therein and the type of opportunities for music performance afforded by this, and for this to be captured by those writing a responsive curriculum. It is clear that students invest emotional, intellectual and physical energy in their music performance. Furthermore, there is the argued recognition by Aristotle in *Politics* that music can indeed form our character. Music curriculum and its handling of this investment is therefore an important matter. There is, I argue, an important and rich dialogue to be had here.

Fourthly, there is potential in considering further the role of gift making for the developing music performer. It is a promising area of philosophical and empirical concern. Psychologically the music performer is doing something for someone else, that is to say, to some extent the attention is elsewhere. Does this

particular set of circumstances bring to the music performer's (for example) developing and continued courage a more nuanced account? My conjecture thus far is that it does. This is, I argue, central to the enjoyment of music making and can encapsulate Aristotelian virtue.

Summation

Throughout my argument I am acutely aware that in *Nicomachean Ethics* we are given an articulate demonstration of the philosophical derived from careful observation of human life. The eudaimonistic goal is aspirational; it seeks a flourishing life, based on human needs. Philosophy is, therefore, of direct practical use.

The following description serves to capture the key debate of this dissertation. It interweaves the musical and human demands of what it is to be a music performer.

“Let's not pretend that this is a nicely air-conditioned room, this is a furnace at times - and so it should be, because you're dealing with things which are at the absolute heart of what it is to lead a meaningful life.”
(Hough)¹⁶²

I posit therefore that how a music performer learns to perform, that is to say, to negotiate their way, both musically and as a human being, is of paramount importance. For, action is what makes us who we are. It is for these reasons, and from having examined the evidence from a range of key perspectives, that I consider Aristotelian virtue offers a responsive and considered manner by which to proceed.

¹⁶² Stephen Hough the pianist is speaking about performance with Yentob (2011), BBC 1, 49 minutes into the programme.

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